CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 57 2018

ISTANBUL'S SLEEPING BEAUTY

A RIDE ACROSS ANCIENT PHRYGIA

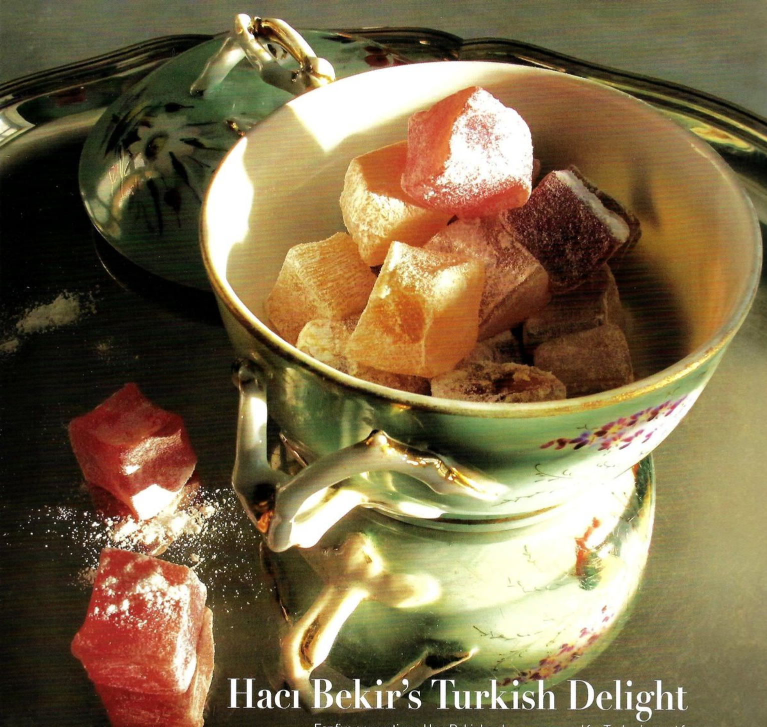
IRIS LOVE'S APHRODITE

PEERLESS PEARS

THE UNTOUCHED BOSPHORUS
A fold-out 19th-century panorama

BLACK SEA MIRACLE

BIRDS ARE BACK IN THE KIZILIRMAK DELTA



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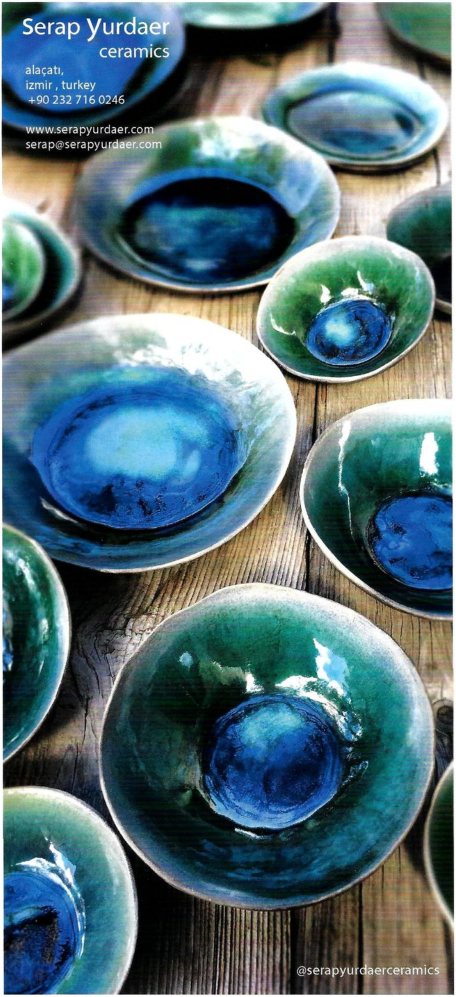
Cover A black tern (*Chlidonias niger*) on the Kızılırmak Delta, photographed by Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu. See 'Waterworld', page 58



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THE ORIGINAL 'CORNUCOPIA'
The Latin *cornu copiæ* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn and a symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

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The Palace Lady's Summerhouse
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Patricia Daunt
Foreword by John Julius Norwich
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YASMINE SEALE, THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

CONNOISSEUR

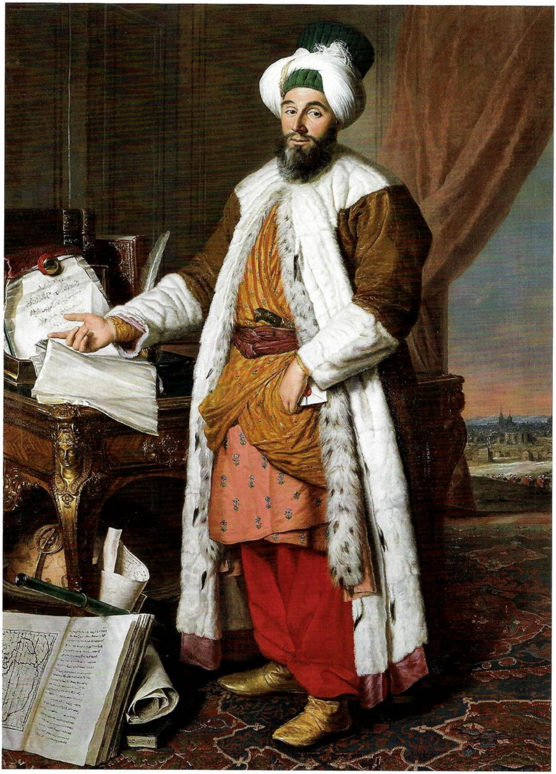
WINNING OVER VERSAILLES, VIBRANT KÜTAHYA, PHOTOS OF ANCESTRAL LANDS, BATHING BEAUTIES, OSMAN HAMDI BEY UNVARNISHED, AND STARS OF THE SALEROOMS

ENTENTE CORDIALE

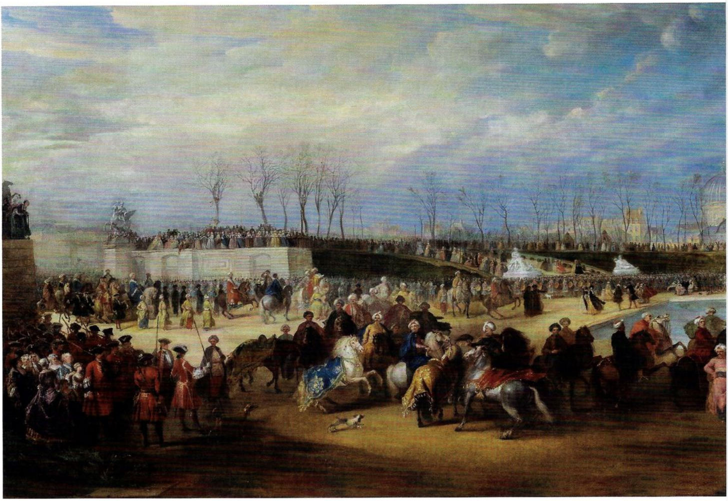
When he arrived in Paris in 1742 as Ottoman ambassador to the French court, Mehmed Said Efendi was depicted as a man of learning and distinction. This lifesize portrait by Jacques André Joseph Aved shows him wearing an ermine-lined kaftan, the cap of a man of law beneath his turban, with a large book by a Dutch jurist on the desk; he points towards his prominent letter of credence bearing the seal of the Ottoman Empire. The portrait was hung by Louis XV in his royal residence at Choisy, a measure of its importance. A centrepiece of the show *Visitors to Versailles* at the Palace of Versailles last winter, it has now moved to the Met in New York.

Already a confirmed Francophile, Said Efendi was feted in France, having made an impression at court two decades earlier. In 1721, aged 25, he had acted as secretary to his father, the first Ottoman ambassador, and developed a fondness for all things French, notably French culture, women and wines. (He famously spent two days and nights lost in the Labyrinth at Versailles with three French noblewomen.) The large volume and maps on the floor in the portrait were printed on the first Turkish press, which he set up after his 1721 French visit.

On his second visit, in 1742,



Right Mehmed Said Efendi (d1761), by Jacques André Joseph Aved, 1742. Louis XV bought this portrait of the Ottoman ambassador at the Salon that year. His entourage is seen entering Paris in the distance

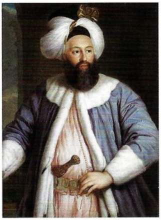


Above Charles Parrocel (1688–1752) made three large paintings of Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi's visit to Louis XV on March 21, 1721. Here he is seen arriving at the Tuileries. Like the reception at the Invalides (far right), this work was one of the highlights of the show at Versailles last winter, but did not travel to New York

Voltaire was sufficiently impressed to call Said Efendi, who had already led embassies to Poland and Sweden and would briefly serve as grand vizier, an "enlightened diplomat". Once back home he started a fad for drinking French champagne.

French culture had also left its mark on his father, Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi (right), who had been sent to Paris in 1721 to grant France permission to restore the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and to secure the release of prisoners captured by the Knights of Malta. As the first-ever envoy from the Sublime Porte, he and his exotic retinue aroused great curiosity.

His embassy journal reveals his reactions: mild offence at the crowds staring at him while eating, surprise at the freedom women enjoyed, and a keen interest in the Gobelins tapestry factory, described as "a workshop for kilim-weavers". He was also fascinated by architecture and landscaping, interests that the King came to share. "Paradise for the infidels" was his verdict on the newly built royal residence of Marly. But his main focus was on Versailles. Mehmed Efendi took back with him to Istanbul 12 engravings of Versailles annotated in his own hand that may have inspired the gardens of Sa'dabad, the summer palace at the top of the Golden Horn built for Sultan Ahmed III. ◆

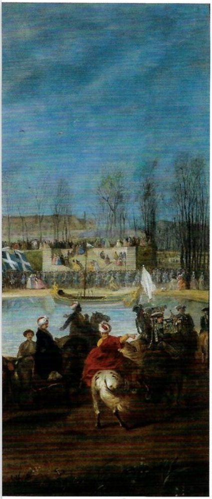


PHILIP MOULD & COMPANY, LONDON

Above Mehmed Said Efendi's father, Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi, first Ottoman envoy to France (and only the second to Europe). This recently discovered portrait, accurate down to the grey hairs in his beard, is probably the one that Pierre Gobert began in 1723 and Louis XV bought in 1727

'Visitors to Versailles (1682–1789)', originally displayed at the Palace of Versailles, is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, until July 29. The catalogue, by Daniëlle O Kisluk-Grosheide and Bertrand Rondot, is available from cornucopia.net, price £50

Right At the conclusion of his 1742 audience with Louis XV, Mehmed Said Efendi presented the King, a keen equestrian, with sumptuous arms and armour. They included this velvet bow case (worth 12,000 livres) and this emerald-studded gunpowder flask (18,000 livres), as well as a bejewelled saddle, harness and set of gold stirrups. Many of these precious objects were sold after the Revolution



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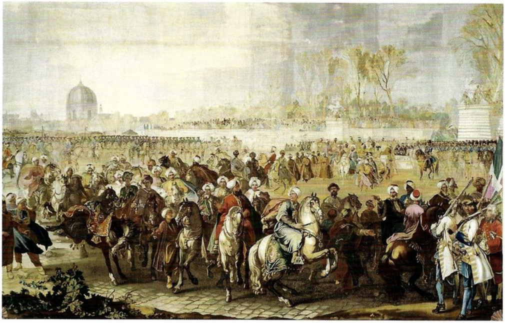
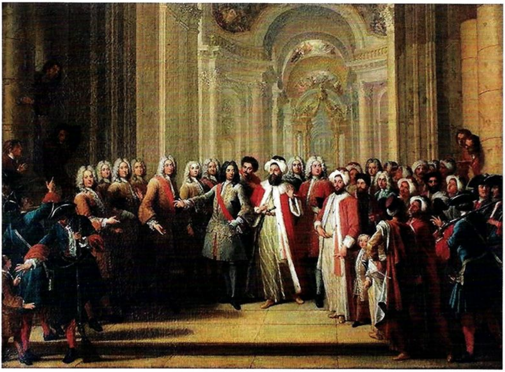


MOBILIER NATIONAL PARIS



PRIVATE COLLECTION

MUSÉE DE L'ARMÉ, PARIS

Top Crowds mob the Ottoman entourage, in a tapestry based on Parrocel's painting of Mehmed Efendi's leaving the Tuileries in 1721, woven at the Gobelins factory in 1734–36. All three of his paintings of the visit were to be part of a tapestry series marking the significant events of Louis XV's life, another sign of the kudos accorded to the four-month visit

Above In Pierre d'Ulin's painting, Mehmed Efendi listens attentively to the minister of war, Claude Le Blanc, at the Invalides on March 25, 1721. Said Efendi, his son and secretary, (and a future envoy), holds a child's hand. The two stayed on in Paris until August, attending ballets and operas – and, on the covert orders of the grand vizier, investigating schools and factories

KÜTAHYA IN MANY GUISES

KÜTAHYA POTTERY LIVED IN THE SHADOW OF THE MIGHTY IZNIK, BUT IT OUTLIVED ITS RIVAL THANKS TO ITS VERVE AND VERSATILITY, AS A NEW SHOW AT THE SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM REVEALS. BY MELANIE GIBSON

The Sadberk Hanım Museum's summer exhibition focuses on its large and varied collection of Kütahya wares, which has expanded threefold since its original publication in 1991. The curators, Hülya Bilgi and İdil Zanbak Vermeersch, have prepared a beautiful catalogue illustrating 282 objects from the 18th to the early 20th centuries.

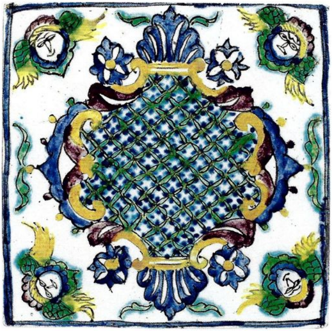
In the 16th and 17th centuries there were two major ceramic-producing centres in Turkey. The cities of Iznik and Kütahya, both on the western side of the Anatolian plateau, produced pottery with the same kind of silica-based body, known as stonepaste (or fritware), covered in a thin white slip to give a perfectly smooth base for a range of vivid underglaze colours, which were coated in a glossy transparent glaze.

Iznik was closer to the capital, and throughout the 16th century its workshops executed commissions for palace circles, particularly for architectural projects, while Kütahya's produced domestic tableware. Until the mid-17th century Iznik was the dominant producer, and a *firman* dated 1608 demands that a quantity of *bora* (sodium), an ingredient of the transparent glaze, should be shipped from Kütahya to Iznik's tile-makers. The fact that an official document had to be issued to ensure this exchange suggests the Kütahya potters were reluctant to relinquish any of their supplies.

The gradual decline of the Iznik potteries – and the exhaustion of their supplies of raw materials was surely a factor – left the field open for the Kütahya potteries to become the country's dominant makers of all types of ceramic wares in the following decades, rising to a peak of productivity and fame in the 18th century.

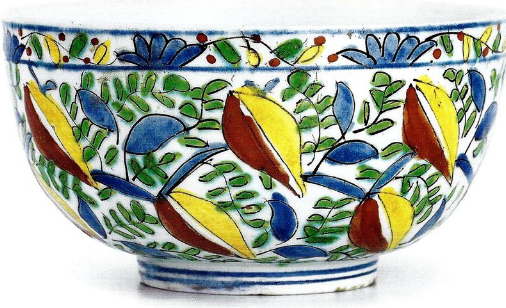
Kütahya ceramics are easily distinguished from the more formally decorated Iznik wares. Finely potted, generally quite small pieces with a thin white body are painted in a palette of bright colours in an exuberant but sketchy style, sometimes rather unfairly described as "rustic". New designs included quaint human figures dressed in contemporary fashions, and patterns inspired by imported Indian textiles and by Japanese and Chinese porcelains. A wide range of shapes included every type of domestic object: inkwells and pen boxes, pilgrim flasks and rosewater sprinklers, dishes and bowls. Most ubiquitous are the pots, cups and saucers used for coffee. In Ottoman documents Kütahya potters are frequently referred to as *fincancı*, "coffee-cup makers".

Documentary evidence shows that at the height of their fame and productivity (and before), management and operation of the Kütahya potteries were controlled by the city's Armenian community. Two documents dated 1764 and 1766 record the settlement of a wage dispute within a workshop specialising in coffee cups. The earlier document lists 34 masters and 69 journeymen,



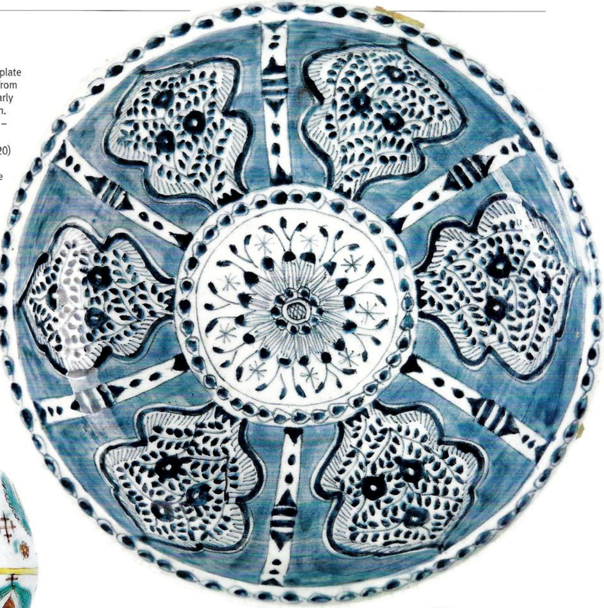
Above: A tribute to Maiolica
This 18th-century tile is decorated with cherubs around a central shield with shell-shaped finials and curling framing ribbons that recall European Maiolica patterns in the rococo style. It may have been intended for renovations to the Armenian Cathedral and Monastery of the two St Jameses in Jerusalem carried out in 1727–37. Tiles with an almost identical design but in different colours were found in the cathedral's chapel of Etchmiadzin, as well as the refectory built in 1741

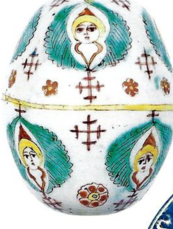
Below: Bright and bold
This bowl, 1700–50, is typical of the Kütahya style. Large red and yellow leaves, attached to a twisting blue vine with green sprigs, wind round the exterior. The draughtmanship is sketchy but the bowl is finely potted with thin walls, the colours vibrant under a glossy transparent glaze. The wide appeal of such tableware is obvious. One French official, Paul Lucas, sent to Turkey on behalf of Louis XIV, bought a full range of these wares in Istanbul, including a dozen coffee cups, and dispatched them home

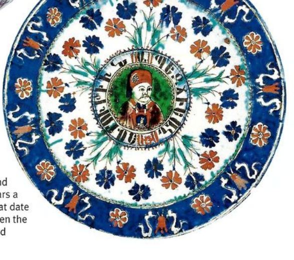


PHOTOGRAPHS: SADNERK HANIM MUSEUM / HADİYE CANGÖKÇE

Right: Chinese whispers
This blue-and-white Kütahya plate dating to c1750–1800 (seen from the back, bottom right) is clearly in a Chinese-inspired tradition. A wave of Chinese porcelains – known as 'Wanli', after the Chinese emperor (r 1573–1620) in whose reign they were produced, or 'Kraak', after the type of Portuguese ship (carrack) that transported them – led to imitations in the Middle East and Europe. This elegant plate's blue-and-white palette, and the division of the surfaces into sections with wide panels enclosing floral motifs, are totally characteristic of this Chinese-inspired style. The model is likely to have been a *copy* of a Chinese dish, since these porcelains were faithfully reproduced in the second half of the 17th century in Iran, most successfully in Isfahan and Kirman







Above: Startled seraphs
Egg-shaped ornaments hung as votive objects in Greek Orthodox and Armenian churches. This one, with cherubs in unusual pointed hats, was made c1750–1800

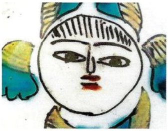
Right: Portrait on a plate
Harutyun Amira Bezciyan (1771–1834), Armenian financier, philanthropist and adviser to Mahmud II, wears a uniform, fez and medal that date the plate to after 1826, when the Janissaries were disbanded

all Armenian with one exception. The agreement states that each ordinary potter would produce 100 cups a day; the masters were responsible for the decoration, and both groups promised not to set up extra pottery wheels or to paint cups in their own homes.

Famous also for their tiles, the Kütahya workshops won many commissions for tiles used in the construction and renovation of Christian and Muslim buildings. An imperial Ottoman edict dated 1710 refers to a large order for repairs to the palace of Ahmed III's daughter Fatma Sultan. A few years later (1718–19), Armenians in Kütahya placed an order for a series of tiles depicting biblical scenes for the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Never used there, they were installed instead, alongside many others with more generic floral designs (a total of 10,000 tiles), in buildings within the Cathedral and Monastery of the two St Jameses in Jerusalem.

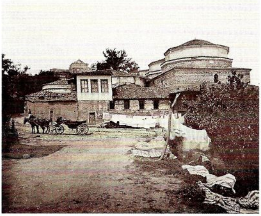
With the country experiencing economic difficulties in the 19th century, the ceramic workshops began to reduce their output, and the quality of their wares began to deteriorate. There are still a few examples of tiles used in buildings in Kütahya, but by the end of the century production was virtually at a standstill. In 1907 the governor of the city wrote in a report to the capital that while there had been as many as 300 potteries in the 17th century, the number had fallen by two thirds by the end of the 18th century and was reduced to only two, both on the point of closing down, at the time he was writing.

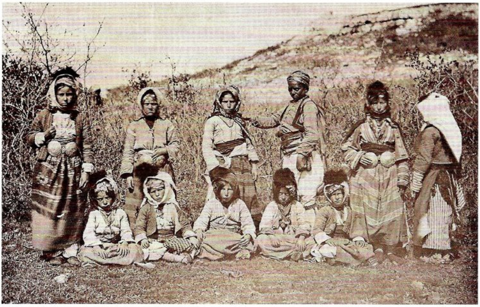
Dr Melanie Gibson lectures on Islamic art and is senior editor of the Gingko Library Art Series. 'Kütahya' is at the Sadberk Hanım Museum, Büyükdere, Istanbul, until Nov 25; sadberkhanimmuzesi.org.tr. The catalogue, by Hülya Bilgi and İdil Zanbak Vermeersch, is available from cornucopia.net at £80



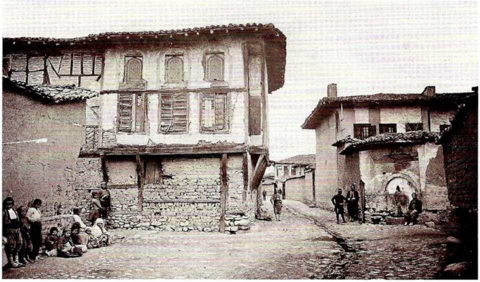
OTTOMAN ARCADIA

Having become fascinated by his dynasty's roots, in 1886 Abdülhamid II sent artists and photographers on an expedition to the Sakarya Valley and the land of his forebears. Visiting Bursa, the first capital, the walled city of Iznik, the hill town of Söğüt and other sites, they created a dozen albums, recording landscapes, buildings and people. Three albums, presented to Bismarck, form the basis of *Ottoman Arcadia: The Hamidian Expedition to the Land of Tribal Roots (1886)*. Photos, maps and sounds immerse us in an Anatolia now almost entirely lost. ANAMED *until Sept 30; anamed.ku.edu.tr*





Above Nomadic Yörük children in the hills above Söğüt Top The Old Baths of Bursa, first Ottoman capital



In Yenişehir, the expedition captured an architectural legacy that would soon be swept away

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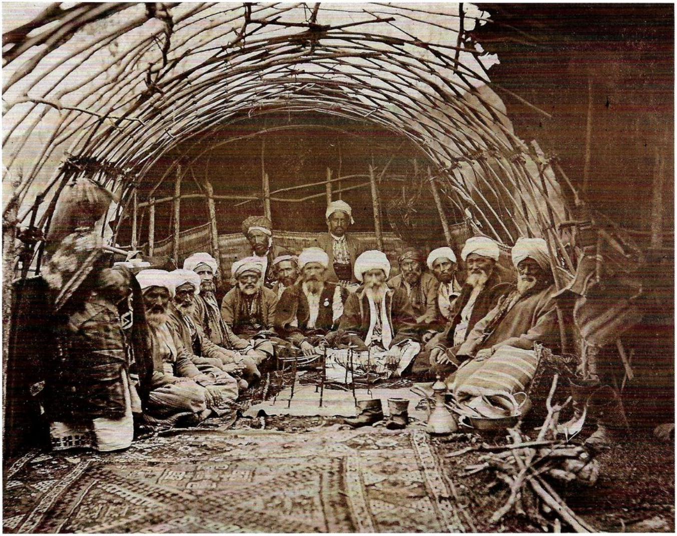
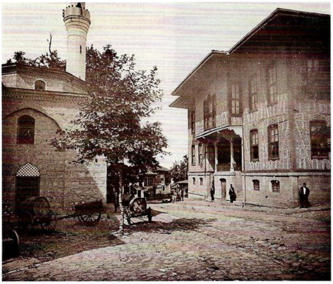
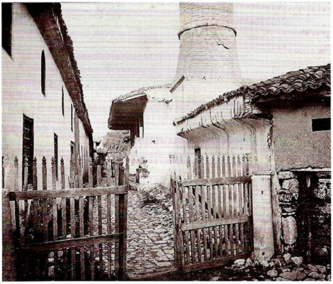


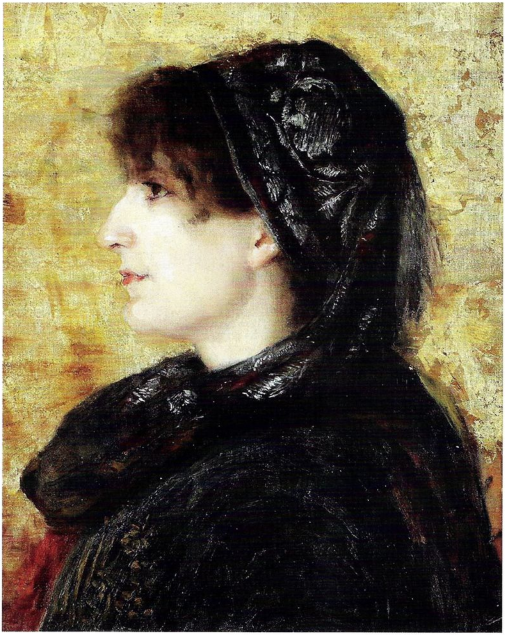
Yörük assembly: Abdülhamid II considered the Yörük to be direct descendants of the Kayı nomads, the Central Asian tribe of his ancestors

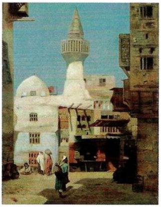


Bursa: the 1339 Mosque of Orhan Gazi and the new 1879 *hôtel municipal*



Iznik: the mosque and tomb of the poet and mystic Eşrefoğlu Rumi (d1469)





SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM

BENEATH THE SKIN

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum is best known for its blockbusters (Ai Weiwei recently filled its halls) and its permanent display of Ottoman calligraphy. But it has other strings to its bow, such as the Istanbul Recitals, held in the Seed, its bizarre bubble auditorium, and a series of mini-exhibitions. The latest of these, *Osman Hamdi Bey: Beyond Vision*, looks beneath the surface of six recently conserved paintings by Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910), founder of the Archaeological Museum and pioneer of Western-style painting. It reveals much about his methods and materials as well as the effect of climate and well-intentioned restoration. Included are *The Mosque* (left), painted after he was posted to Baghdad in 1869, and a striking 1910 portrait of Naile Hanım (above), as Marie Palyart, his French second wife, became known. *sakipsabancimuzesi.org*

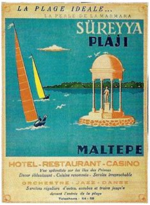
A DIP IN TIME

By Andrew Finkel

It is no longer quite the fashion to display an apposite quote from Turkey's founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, in public foyers or on the façades of government offices as borrowed approval for the activities within. So to see a quotation from the great man at the entrance to an ingenious exhibition at the Pera Museum is, if not a surprise, at least food for thought. However, given that nostalgia is the self-declared subject of the show, it is very much to the point.

"*Denize inmek, medeniyetin işaretidir,*" runs the quotation, translated as "Reaching the sea is a sign of civilisation." What this means is that becoming a coastal nation is preferable to being stuck in the highlands – and it was precisely the prevention of Turkey turning into a landlocked plateau after the First World War that helped prompt its War of Independence in the first place. However, a better translation in the context of this exhibition would be: "Happy are they who put on swimming cossies to take a dip."

Istanbul's Seaside Leisure: Nostalgia from Sea Baths to Beaches documents the young Turkish Republic's discovery that its largest city had clear blue water and public beaches to rival Nice or Bognor Regis. Instead of just looking at the water or gingerly slipping into the sea in the seclusion of an enclosed and gender-segregated wooden "sea bath", Istanbul kicked off its shoes, put on a newfangled swimsuit and had a proper swim.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MEHMET AKSEL ARCHIVE

BÜKE URAS ARCHIVE

Above The Süreyya Plajı at Maltepe, on Istanbul's Asian shore of the Sea of Marmara, featured the iconic Temple of the Virgins
Left Soaking up the sun in fashionable Moda
Below The old 'sea bath' of Aşad in the background of this 1930s photograph of Kalamış, another of the Asian shore's favourite *plaj*, could no longer contain Istanbul's Republican women
Opposite A 1950s advert for Süreyya, which offered a hotel, restaurant and casino, not to mention a jazz orchestra, dancing, a '*vue splendide*' of the Princes Islands and access by train or bus

SEYHUN BINZET COLLECTION

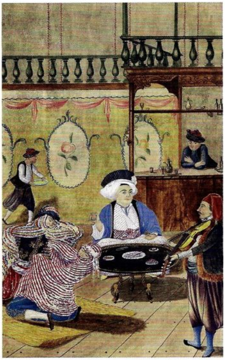
We are reminded that the very act of being able to enjoy its own glorious amenities took literally a revolution and (forgive the pun) a sea change in attitudes. "Getting undressed led Istanbul to lose all the superstitions and prejudices of its past," writes the curator Zafer Toprak. And, of course, one of the dominant images of the era is of Atatürk himself posing for the cameras in a bathing costume. Unlike contemporary European rulers, he has his top half exposed. Even his deputy, Ismet İnönü, whose feet-first dives off the island of Heybeli were almost public events, wore a one-piece covering his midriff.

Where Atatürk plunged, his people were keen to follow. The new Republicans took to the water like the proverbial duck. I remember from the 1960s my school friends taking the train along the Sea of Marmara to the public beaches at Florya. From the Pera exhibition I learned that the district took its name from the White Russian refugees who couldn't quite pronounce "*fülürye*", the word for the greenfinches whose song had once been the principal attraction. In time it became the Russian bathing belles themselves that drew the crowds. The rest, as they say, is social history.

The exhibition is a painful reminder that Istanbul was for a time a city with its own summer playgrounds. The now congested neighbourhoods of Moda, Salacak and Caddebostan all had their beaches, clubs and music halls. As Istanbul grew from a million to more than 15 million, the natural shorelines were concreted over, then easily converted into motorised thoroughfares that in time led to new high-rise neighbourhoods. While the sea may be cleaner now than it was 20 years ago, there are still days when even water off the distant Princes Islands has an unpleasant whiff.

What have we lost? "The land was the domain of authority; the sea, of freedom," the exhibition tells us. Where is that freedom now?

'Istanbul's Seaside Leisure: Nostalgia from Sea Baths to Beaches', Pera Museum, until August 26; peramuseum.org

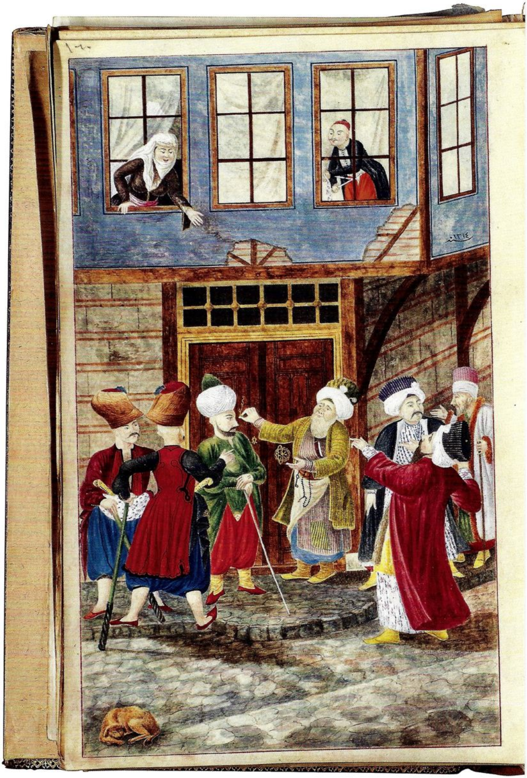


A VERY REVEALING RECORD

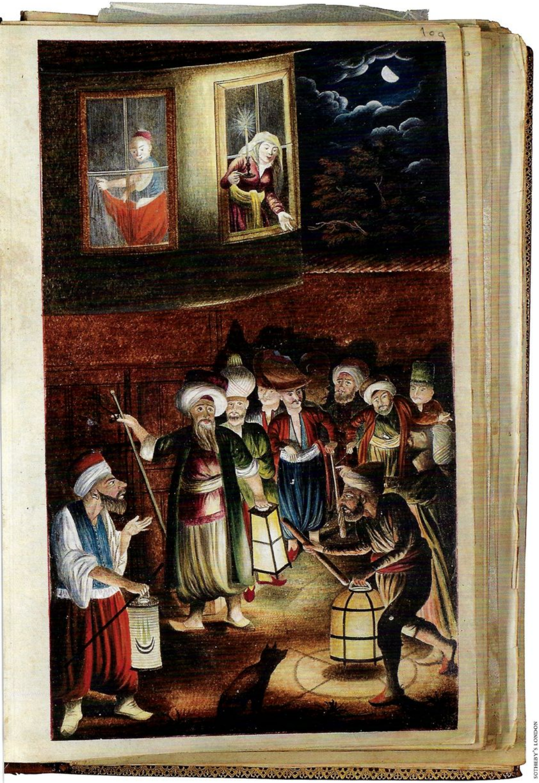
A BOOK OF OTTOMAN EROTICA, MOST OF IT TOO EXPLICIT TO SHOW HERE, CAME UP FOR AUCTION AT SOTHEBY'S LONDON IN APRIL. THE GRAPHIC NATURE OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS AND QUALITY OF THE PAINTING, EVEN IN EVERYDAY SCENES, BRING EARLY-19TH-CENTURY ISTANBUL TO LIFE IN A WAY NO HISTORY BOOK COULD EVER RIVAL

Erotic literature was more common in Ottoman times than our prudish modern world might suspect. Many ateliers must have contributed to the astonishing book sold at Sotheby's London in April for £561,000, with its 85 often explicit miniatures. Its title can be loosely translated as *A Sheikh Remembers his Youth*.

The work would seem to have been prepared by the patron himself commissioning different Istanbul workshops over a period of four decades. In several paintings, including the scene above, he is shown wearing the same blue kaftan and the same blue pleated turban, but remains unnamed. The



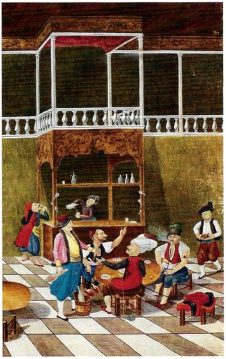
Top left The unnamed man presumed to have commissioned the album is the subject of a portrait at the end of the book in which he holds a bunch of flowers; he also appears in several of the illustrations, some of them erotic. Clearly identifiable by his thin moustache, round face and open expression, he is always depicted, as here, in a blue kaftan. His trademark blue turban is a clue to his possible status. Pleated turbans were worn by court functionaries, and blue ones by private secretaries to the Sultan



SOTHEBY'S LONDON

Above It is rare for Turkish paintings to be set at night. In this scene depicting men in a courtyard holding lanterns, startling a woman and a youth looking out of upstairs windows, the artist shows skill at rendering the dramatic shadows. The book is wide-ranging in the classes it depicts, from the Sultan (possibly Mahmud II), princes and courtiers to soldiers and servants. European men and women are also featured

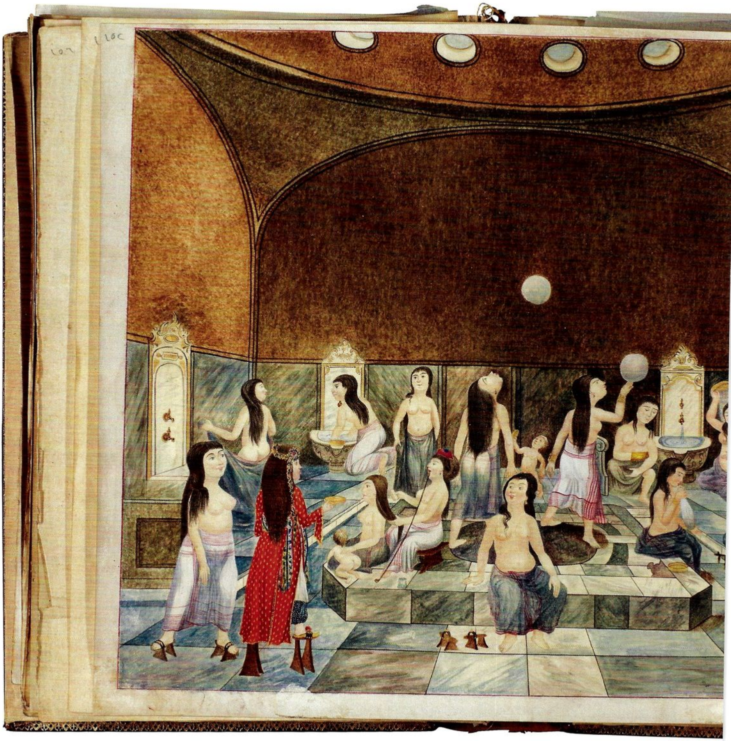
Top right An animated café scene



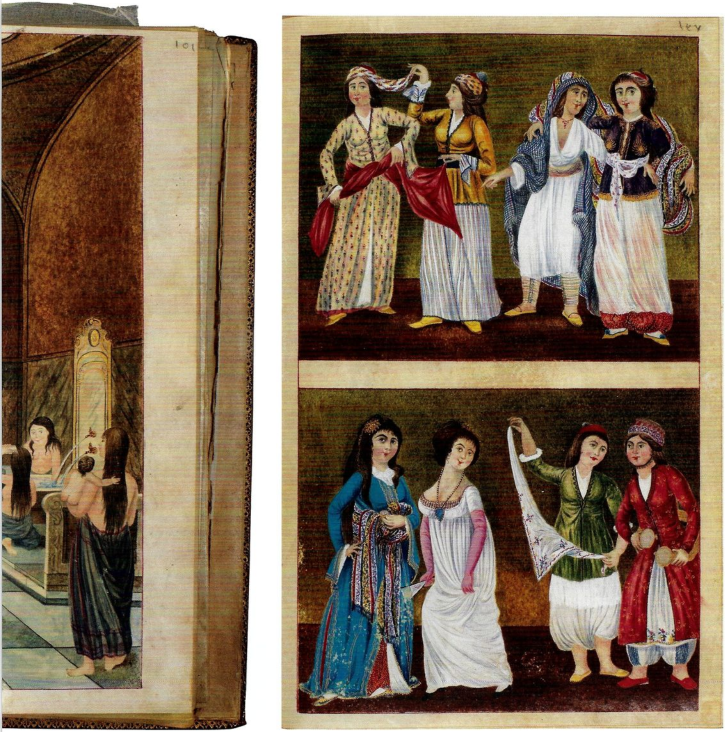
text was probably transcribed in the Ottoman city of Shumnu (Shumen in modern Bulgaria), then a prolific centre of calligraphy.

As the catalogue notes, Ottoman society was "fairly permissive in the 16th century, more conservative in the 17th and quite liberal in the 18th". Books of erotica were known as *bahname*. The most famous, which translates as '*The Return of the Old Man to Youth Through the Power of Sex*', was a 13th-century Arabic text. The first translation into Turkish, for Selim I in 1519, was entitled *Tuhfet al-Mulk*, as it is known today. Translated again in 1779, it became the kernel of the Sotheby's volume, which was only completed in 1817, having grown over the decades into a compendium of manuals dealing with male and female sexuality.

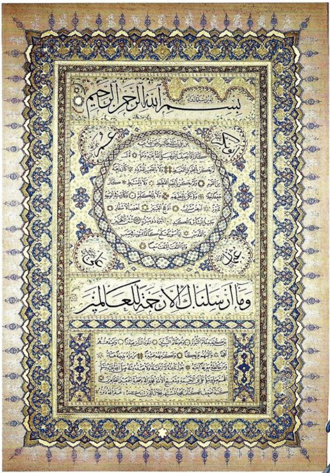
Measuring a sizeable 33 x 22cm, with 209 paper leaves and 85 miniatures on vellum – 39 of them full-page – this is an ostentatious work, exceptional for the number and quality of the paintings, the use of vellum and the central role of the patron. The text is in Ottoman Turkish in *nasta'liq* script. Fortunately, it has been bought by an institution and will now be available for scholars to study. It was previously exhibited in London (*Seduced: Art & Sex from Antiquity to Now*, Barbican Centre, 2007–08).



A day at the baths
This painting is the only double-page illustration in the Sotheby's book, 'A Sheikh Remembers his Youth'. It shows women in a hamam blowing balloons, smoking pipes, scrubbing themselves with a rough goat's-hair glove ('kese') after lying on the heated central marble platform ('göbek taşı'), dousing themselves with water from marble basins ('kurna'), having their hair combed, and balancing effortlessly on tall *nalin* clogs. The illustration of the men's hamam shows much more explicit goings-on

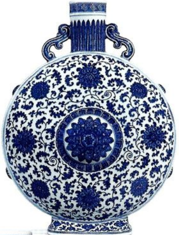


The book is a document of social history that includes beautifully drawn costume miniatures. Outfits denote social status and nationality, including Europeans. Illustrations were carefully selected to complement the text of the manuscript, and commissioned over many years. Vellum, rarely used for miniatures, enhanced the prestige of the volume


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
وما ارسلناك الا رحمة للعالمين

HOLY PROTECTION

Believed to have a protective power, physical descriptions of the Prophet took both literary and exquisite artistic forms in the Ottoman world. Dated 1202AH (AD1787), the example on the left fetched £100,000. Impressively large (61.8 by 43cm) and in pristine condition, it is signed by the calligrapher Mahmud Celaleddin (d1829) and richly decorated in two contrasting tones of gold.

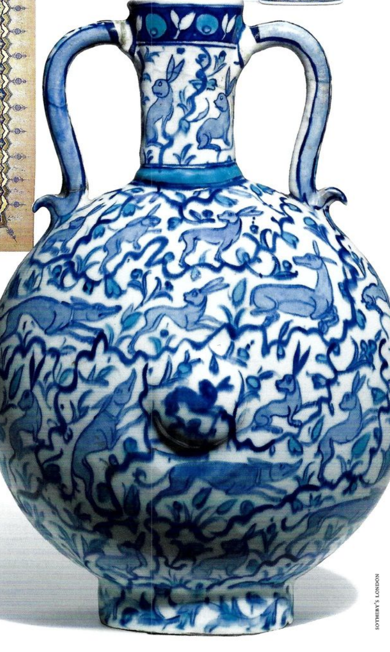


THE SILK ROAD IN BLUE-AND-WHITE

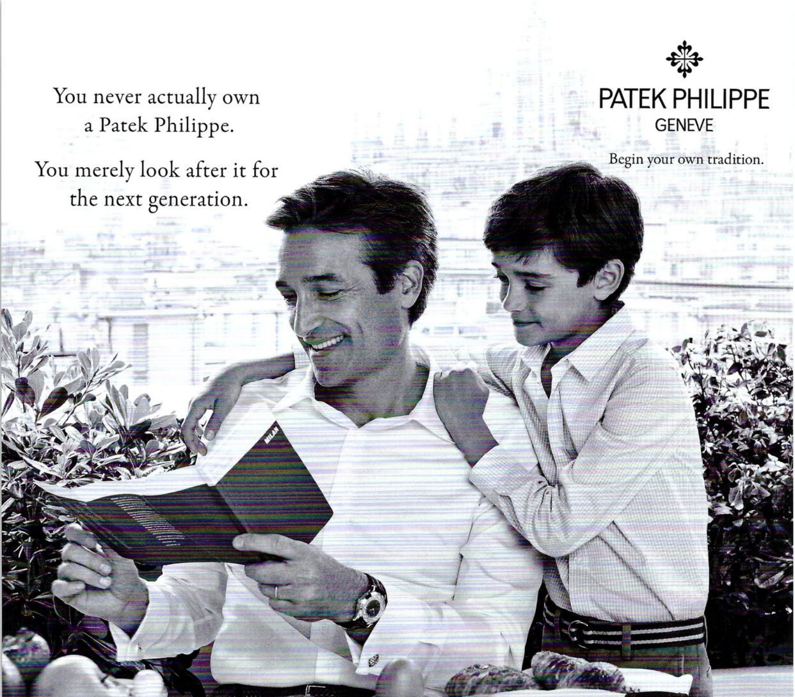
Moon flasks honoured the Chinese emperor's status as reigning Son of Heaven. Appearing first in the 15th century and created well into the 18th, they were originally inspired by Islamic metalwork pilgrim flasks – a vivid case of Silk Road cross-fertilisation. The 18th-century "Lotus" moon flask (top right), half a metre tall, marks the apogee of blue-and-white in the ostentatious Qianlong period, consciously harking back to early porcelain but refined beyond belief. It was offered in May at Sotheby's (est. £1–1.5 million).

This very rare early Iznik pilgrim flask (right) with hounds and hares, c1545, was the star of Islamic Sales Week in April. The potter may have been inspired by Chinese blue-and-white or by Ottoman silver from the Balkans. It fetched £695,000 at Sotheby's, ten times the estimate.

Above Illuminated 'Hilye' (description of the Prophet), 1787–88, by Mahmud Celaleddin (Sotheby's Arts of the Islamic World, April 2018)
Right Iznik pilgrim flask, c1545, in the same sale
Top right Islamic pilgrim flasks inspired the form of this Qianlong blue and white 'Lotus' moon flask (Sotheby's Important Chinese Art, May 2018)



SOTHEBY'S LONDON



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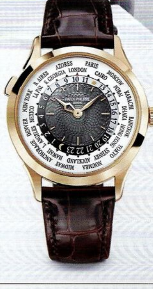

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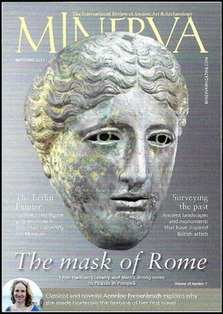
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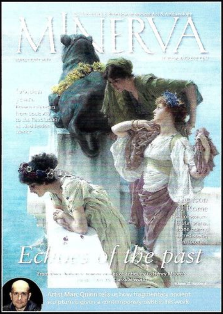
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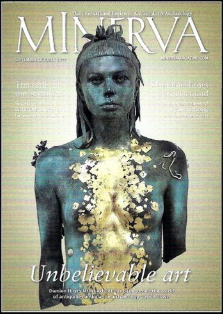
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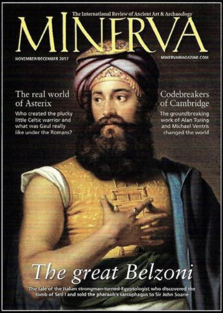
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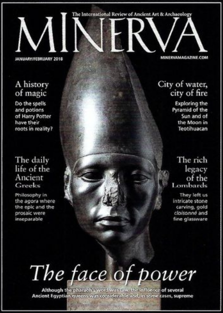
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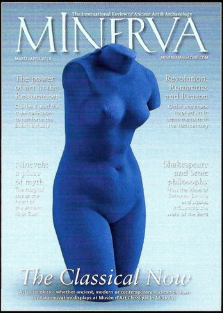
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BOOKS

Fahrelnissa Zeid's adventures in art; Roxelana, the slave girl
who married a sultan; a pocket book of inspiration for the serious traveller;
Turkey as 19th-century Britain imagined her;
a walk back in time – 500 miles of Rome's hidden frontier

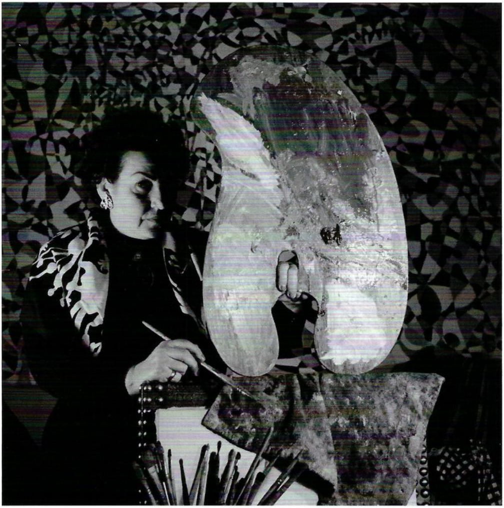
LARGER THAN LIFE

Malika Browne

Fahrelnissa Zeid
Painter of Inner Worlds

Adila Laïdi-Hanieh
Art/Books, £19.99

In 1928 the painter Fahrelnissa Zeid, then 27 years old, spent a few months in Paris with her husband, the academic İzzet Devrim. It was the Paris of Matisse, Picasso and Picabia, Modernism was yielding to Surrealism, and the city was on the verge of surrendering to the Jazz Age. Devrim had taken her to Europe many times before to browse around art galleries and museums, but the purpose of this visit was for him to explore business opportunities and to further his research for a doctoral thesis on the French dramatist and poet Henri Bataille. His young wife wasted no time in signing up at the Académie Ranson, one of the many "free" art schools in Montparnasse, set up in opposition to the fusty academicism of the traditional Salons and the École des Beaux-Arts.



LAVAL STUDIO / COURTESY OF RAAD ZEID AL-HUSSEIN

Above: Tall order Fahrelnissa Zeid with 'Towards a Sky' (1953) at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1954. 'Recent Paintings by Fahrelnissa Zeid' was the ICA's first solo show by a woman, and this canvas was so tall that one third of it had to be rolled up. It was shown as part of her retrospective at the spacious Tate Modern in 2017 and in Berlin in 2018

At the Académie Ranson, Fahrelnissa was occasionally taught by a semi-abstract Cubist painter, Roger Bissière. One day when the students were painting nudes, Bissière studied her painting, before picking it up and throwing it to the floor, exclaiming: "You are not a photographer! You will never be able to imitate nature!" Fahrelnissa, devastated at the time, later said that the incident had taught her to paint the "spirit of things" instead of what she saw before her. She was to learn many years later that Bissière had thought her a "great talent" but that because she was a society woman having fun he had to "break her".

Earlier the same year, the artist had been present at an all-night session of the Language Commission, set up by Atatürk to formalise the new Turkish alphabet for the nascent Turkish Republic. As she was fond of recounting throughout her life, she sat next to Mustafa Kemal as dawn broke outside the Dolmabahçe Palace, and watched as he wrote down the first Turkish word containing the letter 'ü' with the controversial Germanic umlaut.

It was a transcription of her name in the new alphabet as "Fahrünissa". (She later changed it to the more Arabicised version, Fahrelnissa.) She kept the piece of paper in her wallet for many years until one day she lost it.

These two anecdotes are typical of Fahrelnissa Zeid's colourful and eventful life and career. Born on Büyükada, in the Princes Islands, in 1901, at the dawn of the century, she died in Amman nine years shy of its end, in 1991. She and her illustrious family, which numbered a vizier, writers, and two artist sisters among its members, witnessed the twilight of the Ottoman Empire, the birth of the new Turkish Republic, two world wars and, in 1958, during her second marriage, to Prince Zeid (younger brother of King Faisal I of Iraq), the fall of the royal house of Iraq.

Fahrelnissa's life as a francophile and francophone, a modern independent Ottoman woman, prolific painter, diplomat's wife and royal princess went through seminal stages in various cities: learning to paint in Paris, diplomatic postings to Berlin and London with frequent returns to Istanbul and, for a period, to Baghdad.

In her comprehensive and painstakingly researched biography *Fahrelnissa Zeid: Painter of Inner Worlds*, Dr Adila Laïdi-Hanieh depicts the artist's development from a frantic sketcher of everything to a hesitant painter of portraits and whimsical cityscapes, and finally as the exuberant creator of vast, abstract, kaleidoscopic canvases.

COURTESY OF RAAD ZEID AL-HUSSEIN

Fahrelnissa (seated left) with her family on Büyükada, 1910. In 1919 her brother Cevat (seated centre) fatally shot their father, Şakir Pasha (in fez). Exiled to Bodrum, Cevat became the Fisherman of Halicarnassus, one of Turkey's best-loved writers

A painting student of Fahrelnissa Zeid's in Amman in the artist's last years, Laïdi-Hanieh clearly has a great fondness and admiration for her teacher, and writes in intense detail about her mentor's work methods. ("Fahrelnissa's two portraits of Prince Zeid are different testaments of her love…" One, she says, is more than a portrait; "it is a presence, a protective sentinel".) Her detailed descriptions of Fahrelnissa's work are linked painting by painting to the painter's psychological state – Fahrelnissa had frequent bouts of debilitating clinical depression and despondency – and to world events. One particularly memorable passage charts the painter's meeting with the writer, adventurer and minister for cultural affairs André Malraux after she had first met him at a dinner for Charles de Gaulle, given by her husband's great-nephew King Hussein of Jordan. The meeting led to an offer from Malraux of a joint exhibition with Marc Chagall, which, although it never materialised for unrelated political reasons, cemented Fahrelnissa's resolve to pursue her idea of painted chicken bones, or *Paleokrystalos*, which Malraux had pronounced to be "art".

At times, the detail in this book is so dense that it veers towards the forensic, as in sentences such as, "This proves that Fahrelnissa did work after the coup, probably in Ischia while Zeid was in London organizing the apartment and their new status, and she only decided to stop painting after she was reunited with him and felt the extent of his pain." When Fahrelnissa returns to portraiture in the late 1950s, her biographer wonders whether she had in fact been painting portraits throughout her abstract period.

"I wanted to give the full picture as much as I could, in order to reconstruct her career based on fact and in her own words," explains Laïdi-Hanieh in an email from Ramallah, where she now lives.

"I wanted to give new understanding of her original vision of art, thus putting an end to the facile orientalist framings." The "orientalist framings" are a subject that exercises Fahrelnissa's biographer, who notes more than once that Turkish and Iraqi critics were as guilty as Westerners of focusing excessively on the Turkish painter's origins. She describes how the novelist and critic André Maurois wrote of her "hereditary instincts", while others innocently made references to Byzantine mosaics and the "ageless wisdom of the East" present in her paintings.

The ideal and obvious companion for this dense tome is the well-loved *A Turkish Tapestry: The Shakirs of Istanbul* (now out of print) by Fahrelnissa's daughter Shirin Devrim, a more light-hearted romp through a life of swimming parties on the Bosphorus, French touring plays, audiences with Hitler, flamboyant birthday parties featuring enormous cakes, and Fahrelnissa's exuberant dress sense. In *A Turkish Tapestry*, however, there is little sense of Zeid the evolving painter, or the physical energy she must have required to paint on such a scale – her late canvases would fill and sometimes overspill rooms – and in such volume. Not until I read this painting-focused biography did I stop to think about how the larger-than-life woman managed to hold a solo show in her rented 12-room apartment in Maçka one day, and leave the next day for Baghdad, where she spent her time sipping lemonade and coffee at formal, women-only gatherings at the royal court. Nor had I paused to consider how her depressive bouts, when she fell back into frenetic sketching, prepared her for the periods of vigorous painting that inevitably came after, when a different sort of energy – physical endurance coupled with mental focus – came into play.

This biography also explains clearly what a contradiction Fahrelnissa presented: the daughter of an elite Ottoman family who went to art school to study art seriously rather than just dabble in painting, who furnished all her homes throughout her life with Ottoman antiques discarded by "Westernising" Turkish families, who persisted in painting nudes in an atmosphere of lurking conservatism and then creeping modernism, and who embraced abstraction in her work later in life only to return to portraiture in her widowhood. She was the first woman to hold a solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, in 1954, and she cut a large figure as a diplomatic hostess and as an artist on the city's social scene.

Laïdi-Hanieh is forgiving in her treatment of her hot-tempered, larger-than-life and fiercely independent subject, describing how she juggled life at the Iraqi ambassador's residence at 22 Queen's Gate with the life of a successful, internationally acclaimed artist. She converted the third floor of the residence into a studio, and entertained diplomats, royalty and visiting family members in the formal rooms, bringing the two worlds together at her exhibitions. The biography also faithfully (sometimes too faithfully) records the reception of Zaid's work review by review.

Laïdi-Hanieh also describes at length how two factors tipped Fahrelnissa into abstraction in the late 1940s: "She would tell her long-time friend the art critic André Parinaud that what influenced her to turn to abstraction were two visual and perceptual shocks involving receding and appearing objects and colours in space: the twin effects of the sight of advancing and vanishing Bedouin women in their coloured dresses and black *abayas*, whom she saw in Baghdad in 1938 and 1944, and the visual and psychological impact of experiencing air travel for the first time in 1949."

Unusually for a biography, the reader is rewarded with rich illustrations and photographs all the way through the heavy tome. Fahrelnissa, who seemed to do nothing in moderation, cannot have been an easy subject to document. She kept lengthy diary entries, quoted exhaustively, in which she wrote about her impressions on seeing paintings by Fra Angelico, Brueghel the Elder and Peter Paul Rubens, and after watching a Racine play. This is a book to read and reread as a reference book about a remarkable 20th-century figure who deserves to be better known in Turkey and abroad.

TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY

Jason Goodwin

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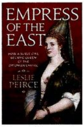


A hundred and fifty million people have watched *The Magnificent Century*, a period soap opera based on the life of Süleyman the Magnificent's foxy Ruthenian consort, Roxelana. Now they can all read Leslie Peirce's absorbing new biography, *Empress of the East*, a historical tour de force which examines the ascent of an insignificant slave girl as imperial concubine, wife and mother, overturning protocol and tradition to marry the lord of the age, Süleyman, the pair seemingly faithful – and loving – for the rest of their extraordinary lives.

This is an exciting book. I don't know of any history which so brilliantly makes the case for understanding how the political and the domestic intertwine. Historians have tended to glide past the harem like so many Halberdiers of the Tresses, gaze averted, to concentrate on divan business – chaps with their maps. Yet this is far from how the Ottomans understood themselves. "In a polity where the royal household was the government," Prof Peirce writes, "disorder in the harem could provoke disorder in the state."

So much of the material Peirce had to work with is obdurate and obscure, yet she has rifled it to create a convincing portrait not only of her protagonist but of the mechanisms of 16th-century Ottoman government. Plenty of conjecture here – I count an average of five conditionals on every page – but Peirce knows her stuff. People have spun bigger biographies of Shakespeare out of nothing more than a few lines of his will and evidence of property speculation in provincial England.

Roxelana – not her real name, which is unknown – left behind some of her letters to Süleyman, and foundation documents for the mosques and medreses which she endowed and supervised. Contemporaries provided some gossip and background speculation. But, for Peirce, the Ottoman "obsession with bookkeeping threw open the gates of royal palaces". In a single chapter she draws on everything down to palace laundry lists to plumb the pros and cons of concubinage, the diversions offered by Manisa, the role of grandmother, seasonal change, music, hunting and the influence of the tutor. *Empress of the East* reads like a gripping detective story, a masterclass in divination, deduction and conjectural analysis.

Süleyman signalled his arrival on the world stage with the capture of Belgrade in 1521 and returned to Istanbul in triumph. But he also, as Peirce shows, contended with a domestic tragedy that had profound political implications, when three of his four sons were carried off by plague. Suddenly the succession – and the stability of the empire – was in question.

The Ottoman fratricidal law was the downside of a system which ensured a supply of able male heirs, and it was the price the dynasty traditionally paid to ensure continuity of rule and, by extension, political stability. The concubine who produced a potential heir was to be honoured and pensioned while preparing her son for rulership. Her sexual duties were done: that stage of life was over; she would not sleep with the Sultan again. As Süleyman's mother, Hafsa, had accompanied her young prince to Caffa and Manisa, so each concubine would follow her son to the provinces to oversee his court, maintain the Ottoman ways and canvas support for the coming struggle.

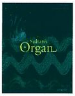
All this is well known, but when Prof Peirce weaves into it the culture, the traditions, the expectations and the family dynamic, she shifts our perspective. *The Magnificent Century*, curiously, did much the same thing. Of course the soap was heavily fictionalised and simplified, but it did similarly present the behaviour of the principals as a sequence of choices, within a certain milieu.

Peirce records the establishment of the Sultan's two imperial "families". One was in the Ottoman tradition of one mother, one son: Süleyman's firstborn, Mustafa, only survivor of the palace epidemic. The other broke the mould. Roxelana produced a boy, Mehmed – and, against all precedent and protocol, returned to Süleyman's bed. "Abandoning the practice of rotating concubines would disrupt delicate power balances worked out over two centuries," Peirce observes. No wonder people suspected Roxelana of witchcraft. Endowing her with demonic sexual powers satisfactorily covered a succession of family tragedies, beginning with the Sultan's execution of Mustafa. Peirce spurns the melodrama for a more obvious explanation: Süleyman simply loved his "Hurrem" (Roxelana's Turkish name, meaning Joyous).

Together they built a family, par for the course in any household other than this one. Selim arrived quickly enough to pair with Mehmed in the family dynamic: they were circumcised together. Then came the beloved daughter, Mihrimah. The younger boys, Bayezıd and Cihangir, also went together, while Cihangir, withdrawn from the hurly-burly by disability, perhaps brought the greatest pleasure to Süleyman, spending time with him on campaign and in Istanbul. Peirce convincingly casts the hunchbacked Cihangir as the lovable, outgoing younger son, freed by his disability from the pressure of rulership.

But Cihangir was never as free as he might hope from the appalling fate that awaited all but one of the Sultan's sons. Roxelana broke the protocols of concubinage, but it was too soon to shatter the iron laws of Ottoman succession. Süleyman's successor would put his brothers to death. When Cihangir suggested that his deformity might excuse him, Süleyman rather cheerlessly replied: "My son, Mustafa will become the sultan and will deprive you all of your lives." And there, in a nutshell, is the central tragedy of Roxelana's triumph. Her rival, Mustafa's mother, would naturally fight to put her son on the throne: she had everything to play for, and if she lost, she lost. Roxelana, on the other hand, would lose even if she won.

Two crises in which observers later descried Roxelana's influence stain Süleyman's record: the murder or execution of İbrahim, the mighty vizier, and of Mustafa, the popular and seemingly loyal son. Peirce uses all her understanding of realpolitik, of the pressures and rules of governance, to justify those killings, and readers will enjoy judging for themselves how successfully she pleads her heroine's cause.



Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy is probably best known for his book *The Rise and Fall of the English Nanny*, and after Leslie Peirce's *The Sultan's Organ*, his new book, is a bit of a bagatelle. But it is an enjoyable read, accompanying the Elizabethan organ-maker Thomas Dallam on an improbable adventure to deliver a complete working musical organ to Ahmed III. Based on Dallam's own vigorous account, the book explores the diplomatic setting of the exchange, introducing us to some of the personalities involved and illuminating the struggle to get the capitulations, granting favourable trading status, extended to English merchants.

Jason Goodwin is the author of 'Yashim Cooks Istanbul: Culinary Adventures in the Ottoman Kitchen', £12.99

TRAVELLING COMPANION

Barnaby Rogerson

123 Places in Turkey
A Private Grand Tour

Francis Russell
Wilmington Square Books, £16.99

Guidebooks occupy the very lowest shelf of literary existence. I am not even sure they count as being "written", for they are often compiled by an editorial team, working for publishers who have assumed the copyright. They are seldom reviewed, routinely overwritten as they are by a new generation of advertorial hacks, cutting and pasting information from web searches and rival publications.

Sometimes they even evolve into a malign influence, turning independent travellers into tourists on an established rat run of routes, and forever questing after untouched villages and authentic local restaurants to ruin by their presence. They have no second-hand value, and though older editions of *Lonely Planet*, *Time Out*, *Bradt*, *Footprint* and *Rough Guides* may be fondly kept as records of past travels, they are all ultimately doomed to be pulped. I speak not with malice, but with experience, having written half a dozen guidebooks myself.

An exception is *123 Places in Turkey*. It is not so much a guidebook as a pocket book of inspiration which returns us to the animating purpose of travel: to journey, to look, to marvel and to learn. It's written with passion by a man of exceptional physical and intellectual stamina, who has spent 30 years pursuing what is visually remarkable in the vast landscape of Turkey. Francis Russell's eyes have been well trained. His day job is at Christie's, which has given him a lifetime of experience in assessing how the combination of provenance, craftsmanship, patronage and rarity affects our assessment of an object's worth. He understands how each culture identifies itself through built structures (of equal importance to language and food) and how they lean on the achievements of their rivals from the past.

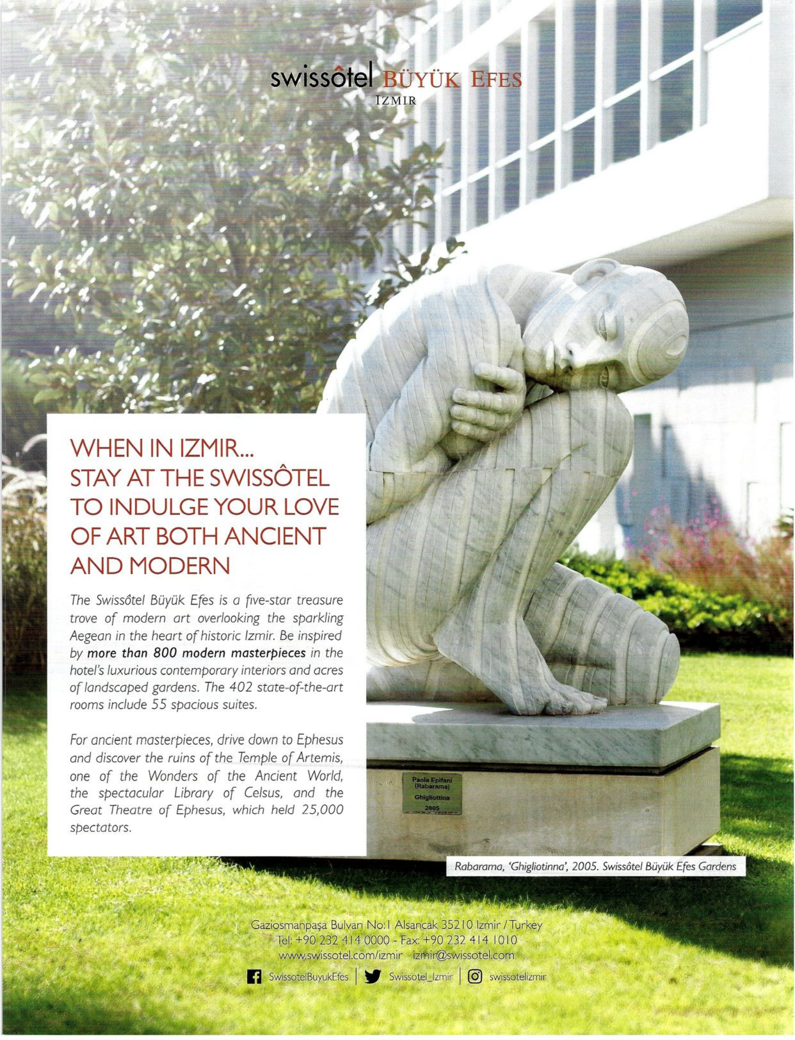
So to travel in Turkey with Francis Russell is to embark on a modern Grand Tour. There are no restaurant or hotel recommendations, no shopping hints or tips for good bars here. We are entertained by the quest for aesthetic beauty, and in the process we get to know the geological layers of human culture, how the rich tilth of Hellenistic, Roman, Armenian, Byzantine, Georgian, Seljuk and Ottoman look in their prime and influence each other. We are shown the purest historic architecture: ancient neglected temples, mountain-top castles, the melancholic ruins of medieval churches, the shattered hulks of ancient bridges as well as the rich and still working heritage of mosques, medrese and han. Russell confesses to be "more interested in buildings than foundations" and to prefer "unexcavated sites to those where the hand of the archaeologist is officiously evident". So on this Grand Tour we are not going to be taken to see the reconstructed walls of Troy and Catalhöyük or the sombre evidence of the Hittite period etched into their unlovely taste for dark basalt stone.

He earns your respect by his eye for the telling detail, his love of nature, for taking the hard path, for chatting up local shepherds, for giving hitch-hikers lifts (even farmers bearing ploughs) and for respecting the Kurdish, Armenian, Georgian and Greek elements which have all helped form the heritage of modern Turkey. He acquires the right to make an emphatic judgement through the breadth of his experience, through repeated visits to favourite sites and meticulous attention, so that one listens when he announces that the oracular temple at Didyma is the "single most beautiful classical monument in Asia Minor" or when he compares the shelving used for scrolls in the Roman library at Nysa with that at Ephesus.

There are useful pointers to the right track once you are within a day's walk of your destination, but most mortals will need an additional guidebook, a map and maybe even a local guide. You will also require a stick, thick trousers and tough boots if you aspire to follow in his footsteps, let alone join him in enjoying the view from the acropolis. Do not be led astray by the subtitle into thinking you can pack all this into a single Grand Tour. I have been exploring Turkey for 30 years and have only made it to a quarter of Russell's 123 places. Though small, the book has been beautifully made by the publishers, with sewn sections, a clear typeface, blue silk ribbon and a sprinkling of photographs that adorn the text.

When the first edition came out, I tested it on a trip that took me in Russell's footsteps to the melancholic ruins of a line of imposing Roman warehouses by the old docks of Andriake, to stand, strangely moved, beside the "waterlogged" site of the sanctuary of Letoun (haunted still by frogs), to be bewitched before the monumental rustic simplicity of the Carian temple at Gerga, to pace the walls of the Rhodian fortress that still commands the near-perfect natural harbour of Loryma, and to follow the line of the Hellenistic walls sprouting from the granite tors that encircle Heracleia – where the goddess of the Moon fell in love with the sleeping Endymion.

This new, expanded edition arrived too late for my recent trip but did give me the chance to double-check my own experiences in southeastern Turkey. Russell's advice to walk around the rock-hewn moat of the citadel at Urfa was spot on, as was his appreciation of how an 18th-century architect had consciously doubled the glory of the mosque by playing with the reflecting waters of Abraham's Pool. Nor could I disagree with his description of the temple of the Moon god Min at Sumatar "as unquestionably one of the most atmospheric religious sites in Turkey". But I was appalled to find that despite walking in the company of Britain's leading Turkophiles (Jason Goodwin and Jeremy Seal), we had missed a



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IZMIR

WHEN IN IZMIR... STAY AT THE SWISSÔTEL TO INDULGE YOUR LOVE OF ART BOTH ANCIENT AND MODERN

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For ancient masterpieces, drive down to Ephesus and discover the ruins of the Temple of Artemis, one of the Wonders of the Ancient World, the spectacular Library of Celsus, and the Great Theatre of Ephesus, which held 25,000 spectators.

Rabarama, 'Ghigliotinna', 2005. Swissôtel Büyük Efes Gardens

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13th-century caravanserai, a Roman village and the quarry from which the walls of Harran were carved.

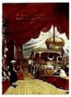
A lesson learned. I will not travel in Turkey again without Russell: idiosyncratic, trustworthy and impeccably researched, fit to stand as a prologue to the four volumes of TA Sinclair's survey of Eastern Turkey and George Bean's four volumes on the classical sites of Western Turkey.

IMAGINARY TURKEY

David Barchard

THE SHAPING OF TURKEY IN THE BRITISH IMAGINATION 1776–1923

David S Katz
Palgrave Macmillan, £89



Is there truly such a thing as "the British imagination" and, if so, how does one go about mapping it? David Katz believes that as far as Turkey was concerned there was in both the 19th and the 20th centuries, and he investigates it with detailed research into the life and writing of five figures he sees as crucial to it, ending with the suggestion that English readers had images of Turkey "which kept Turkey-in-Europe without abandoning Turkey-in-Asia".

I wish I was as certain. Turkophilia and, even more so, Turkophobia are minor but persisting themes in British life since 1800, often coupled with Philhellenism (ie, endorsement of Greek nationalism) and, less often, its opposite. Turkophobia surfaced unpleasantly and very stupidly, but unmistakably, in the 2016 Brexit referendum.

One would hardly guess anything like that from the five men David Katz selected for his searching and highly readable accounts, though his choices are a little unexpected: Edward Gibbon, Lord Byron, Benjamin Disraeli, John Buchan and Arnold Toynbee. Some of these are surely peripheral figures where Turkey is concerned.

Is it really correct to say that Edward Gibbon and the later chapters of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* shaped 19th-century British perceptions of Turkey, or that John Buchan and *Greenmantle* did the same for the 20th century? As far as Gibbon's influence is concerned, Katz quotes Byron saying that it was Sir Paul Rycaut's *Turkish History* that had caught his imagination as a boy and made him want to visit the Levant. *Greenmantle* is surely remarkable for being an imagined rather than an accurate picture of conditions in Anatolia during the First World War. When writing it, Buchan drew on what he had heard about Turkey from his friend Aubrey Herbert, who knew and loved Turkey, but somehow this does not come through to the reader.

That said, Katz's chapters are impressively researched, with a wealth of biographical detail, surprising facts and unfamiliar quotations, trawled not just from secondary printed sources but from documents in the National Archives and private memoirs. The spotlight brought to bear on each biographical portrait is compelling, though there are moments at which the author seems to condescend to his subjects. When Arnold Toynbee, earlier an outspoken Turkophobe writing propaganda during the First World War, helps save hundreds of Turkish civilians' lives at the hands of the Greek army in 1921, Katz writes that he "behaved exactly like a young Englishman of his class, born… to the notion that he belonged to a privileged group of superior beings whose natural (if sometimes reluctant) task it was to lead and to rule, imposing British values on benighted natives". Elsewhere Katz describes Toynbee as foolish. "Pedantry was never a temptation that Toynbee could resist," he observes and seems to think that Toynbee, one of the best-known and most brilliant minds of his generation, was unwise in twice resigning what would have been jobs for life.

As for Byron, whose last words were "Poor Greece" but who is here listed among the Turkophiles, Katz believes that he was "eventually tricked into supporting a cause [the independence of Greece] in which he did not believe". Some may find this judgement of the poet who wrote "The Isles of Greece" counter-intuitive.

Occasionally the droll tone oversteps the mark. WT Stead, a critic of Turkish actions in Bulgaria in 1876, "would meet his Maker on board the Titanic"– a rather flippant way to describe a heroic death helping women and children while refusing to board a lifeboat. Still, on many big topics, Katz hits the bullseye. He sees 1876 as a turning point for perceptions of Turkey in Britain and correctly identifies the Oxford historian EA Freeman as one of Turkey's worst enemies, "the real villain of the piece… vicious and mean-spirited".

He does less well with Malcolm MacColl, Gladstone's amanuensis in Turkophobia, whom he wrongly supposes to have lived part of his life in Turkey and been only a relatively minor figure in anti-Turkish agitation, and James Bryce, Toynbee's senior partner in writing the Blue Book on the Armenians in the First World War. Bryce had been pushing the Armenian nationalist case since 1876 and received most of his information during those earlier decades not from American missionaries in Anatolia (who in most cases, contrary to their later reputation, struggled to be neutral) but from Armenian nationalists in Istanbul and London.

These are quibbles. This is not a general history of Britain and Turkey in the 19th century but a set of lively and enjoyable essays, trying to guide the general reader through a tangle of largely forgotten personalities and controversies, ones which still have more of an impact on Britain and Europe today than most people realise. It is sad that, at £89 for the hardback edition and a stunning £76 for the Kindle version, it will have far fewer readers than it deserves.

A WALK LIKE NO OTHER

Barnaby Rogerson

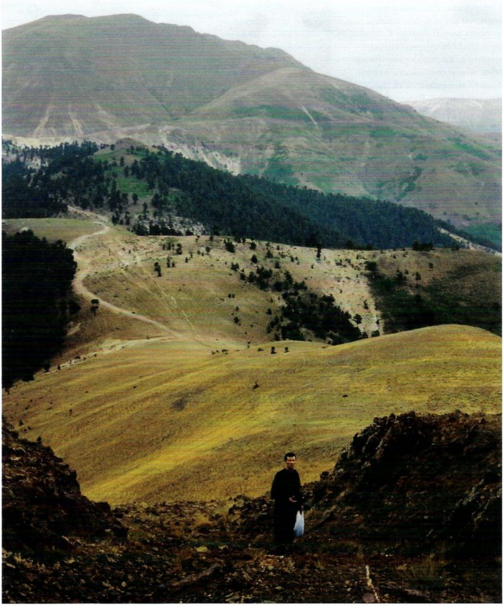
EAST OF ASIA MINOR
Rome's Hidden Frontier

Timothy Bruce Mitford
OUP, 2 vols, £225

Every year Hadrian's Wall has a hundred thousand visitors, of whom seven thousand walk the 73-mile-long *limes*, the Roman frontier. The history of this frontier, in the most obscure and unrewarding northwestern province of the Roman Empire, has been under constant investigation for the past 180 years. Its conservation was largely achieved through the passion of just one man (a Newcastle lawyer called John Clayton, 1792–1890), who had the good fortune to have a father called Nathaniel who introduced him at the age of four to his lifelong passion for antiquities.

Every year another book about some historical aspect of "The Wall" is published in Britain, while its influence is embedded in popular culture – witness *Game of Thrones* and blockbuster films such as *Stardust*.

By contrast, the easternmost frontier of the Roman Empire is truly the "Hidden Frontier". Until the publication of this book, no archaeologist had ever worked out the 500-mile route, no historian had written about its forts and no travel writer had marched its length. Yet it guarded some of the richest and most civilised provinces of the entire empire. With the occasional exception (such as Sapor's invasion of AD256), for 500 years it protected its dazzling, gorgeous cities and ancient temples from the cavalry armies of the Parthian Kings and Sassanid Shahs, as well as the Mountain Lords of Georgia and Armenia in the Caucasus. It is seven times the length of Hadrian's Wall, and rises to altitudes seven times the height as it climbs across the Taurus Mountains and the Pontic Alps,



TIMOTHY BRUCE MITFORD

ROCK-CUT GATES CARRY THE ROMAN FRONTIER DOWN TO AĞYARLAR RIDGE. BEYOND IS MOUNT DEVEBOYNU

as well as marching beside the deep, impenetrable gorges of the Upper Euphrates.

As the author writes, "All has remained hidden", though he is unfailingly courteous to that small but intrepid band of vice-consuls, adventurers and military engineers seconded to the Ottoman Empire who have looked for or stumbled upon the *limes*: DG Hogarth, VW Yorke, JG Taylor, H von Moltke, Colonel Maunsell, J Brant and Freya Stark.

This all conspires to make Timothy Bruce Mitford's *East of Asia Minor* an extraordinary achievement on a host of levels. He is the first man to have consciously walked this entire Roman frontier since the days of Justinian. He is the first historian positively to identify the route that threaded together the line of legionary garrisons and forts. He is also the field worker who has collated the evidence for future generations. I cannot think of another example, in my lifetime, where the different roles of historian, explorer, field surveyor and linguist have been combined so successfully in one man.

What makes it even more poignant is that Mitford, as well as being the first to find and map the frontier, is also the last. For those with the stamina to try to follow his footsteps through the mountains, vast stretches remain, but great sections have already been buried under the rising waters of the irrigation dams that are transforming this region of Turkey, as well as accidentally obliterated by new roadworks, deep ploughing and forestry.

I did at first wonder why the work needed to be spread over two volumes, but once I started delving into his quest, I began to understand Mitford's desire to record scrupulously. Early on he must have realised that even if he managed to be the first to record the entire frontier, he was certainly going to be the last. The second volume is a meticulous offering to future generations of scholars. We have a citing of every inscription observed (both by himself and cross-referenced with the accounts of earlier travellers), its position, its size and text, often accompanied by a simple, poignant comment – "Lost before 1964", which proves how invaluable this book is already. We also have the record of every coin find, a hands-on appreciation of the Anatolian landscape in the hinterland of the frontier, a complete list of every known textual reference, a detailed series of modern maps referenced to a topographical index, and an identification of modern Turkish villages with both their Ottoman and ancient identities. The latter were preserved for us by the chance survival of the 225 road routes mapped out for Caracalla (the Antonine Itinerary) and a complete list of officials and military units made for Theodosius in 395 (the Notitia Dignitatum).

The flesh of the work is contained in the 425 pages of volume one. I hope that one day this will be filleted down to become a travel book with a price (down from the current £225) that can put it in the pocket of any reader who enjoys adventure, history and the romance of a quest achieved across a fascinating landscape over a lifetime.

Mitford started on this work as a student, first catching sight of the Euphrates on September 8, 1963. As he self-deprecatingly informs us, the task of exploring this section of the *limes* took him longer than the legions took to build it. Though he achieved a thesis based on it, his day job was never as a professional classicist like his father (see the Mitford and Bean article in CORNUCOPIA 23) but as a naval officer. Progress was necessarily erratic: the 1960s were highly productive (because the Royal Navy were delighted to encourage a fluent Turkish speaker in their ranks), the 1970s indifferent, but the early 1980s were very good, when his work was supported by the Turkish Navy while he served as British representative at their Ankara headquarters. In the 1990s some resentful bureaucrat awarded Mitford a black mark, which frustrated many a visa application. Fortunately, better-informed Turkish citizens, such as the minister of defence and the chief of staff, trusted Cdr TB Mitford enough to ask him to serve as their interpreter.

However, this enforced longueur brought its own literary benefit, making Mitford an observer not just of the Roman frontier, but of the transformation of Anatolia in the past 50 years. Bear cubs once played under his seat in an antiquated bus on the road to Melitene. He has watched boars as large as small donkeys graze in the evening shadows of a Roman road, and a mile-long line of water buffaloes steaming patiently in the frost before dawn. He has witnessed Roman coins being used as small barter change with which to buy cigarettes, caught the last of the camel caravans festooned with cooking pots and hollow beehive logs, and journeyed on a goatskin raft, lit up by lightning, in a gorge of the Anti-Taurus.

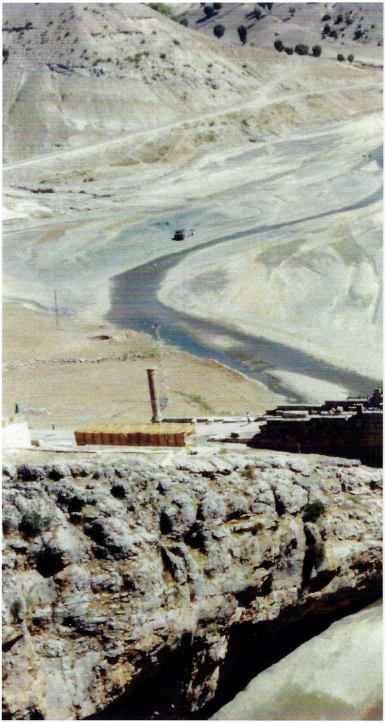
Mitford is an articulate witness to the change of "an ancient and conservative way of life". He writes of villages "remote, isolated and largely self-sufficient, depending on barter and agriculture, as they had done since the departure of the legion, and radiating a traditional courtesy and hospitality. Drinking water was carried from a spring above the village, ploughing and hauling was by water buffalo, a source of milk, meat, heat and fuel. Processions of wooden-wheeled *arabas* brought corn from the surrounding fields, and threshing floors were busy with flint-studded sledges and huge wooden winnowing forks."

We also meet a recognisable cast of villains among the Emperors. Such as the jealous Tiberius, humiliating a proven ally of Rome (loyal old King Archelaus, the last ruler of Cappadocia, descended from both Xerxes and Alexander), just as Nero would destroy Corbulo, an incredibly talented Roman governor. Yet, unlike the British Isles, which only enters written history as a province of the Roman Empire, Rome did not bring civilisation to this part of Turkey. She was just another invader who imposed herself upon Commagene and Cappadocia ten thousand years after the first human-built monuments had arisen on the hills of Anatolia.

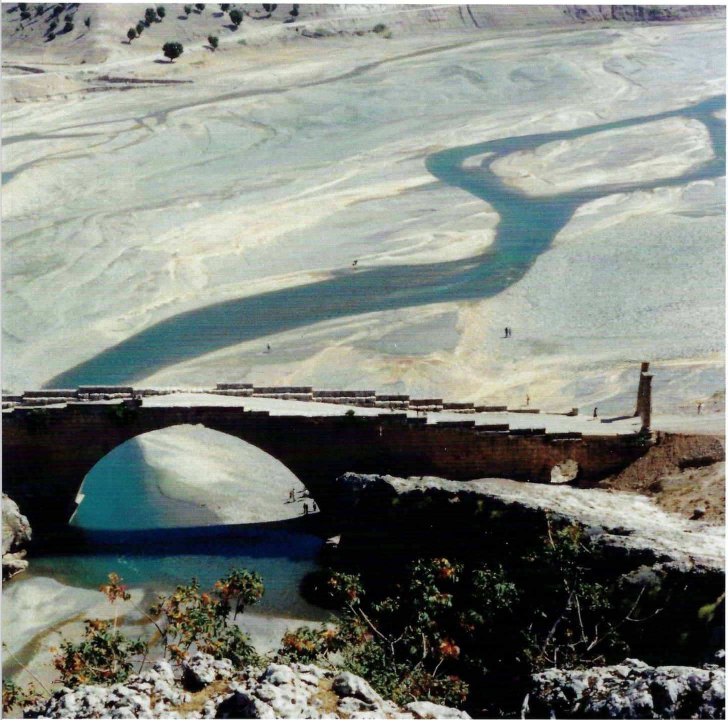
If this hidden frontier needs a single identifiable founder for its nomenclature, it has to be Vespasian's Wall. It was this general who sorted things out in the aftermath of the civil strife of the year of the four emperors. The XII Fulminata legion were dispatched north (away from their disgrace in Judea) to garrison Melitene aided by his own XVI Flavia Firma, a legion of proven worth, who were based on Satala. He had 12,500 legionnaires at work on everything from road- and bridge-building to watching over quarries and making armour, assisted by an even larger number of auxiliary cavalry detachments (who leave a very scant trace of inscriptions) deployed in 29 smaller forts.

From Mitford's research we can watch the careers of young noblemen from Anatolia, such as Pompilius Piso, serving his apprenticeship as a legate in the legions, before returning to a position of honour in his home city of Ephesus. Or Centurion T Cervonius Lucius, who served for 25 years but died aged 44 in retirement at Ankara. There is tantalisingly little evidence for the soldiers, apart from the roads they carved and the walls they laid. They, and the many Turkish companions of Mitford's travels (be they gendarmes, scholar schoolmasters, shepherds or distinguished academics), are the heroes of this work.

Now and then, the legions were led by men worthy of their loyalty, such as Alexander the Great's biographer Arrian, whose understanding of history was informed by his own experience as a Roman frontier general and governor of Cappadocia. In one of Arrian's letters to the Emperor Hadrian, it is clear that Hadrian had personally inspected the frontier works two years before. The two men had clearly delighted in the fact that a newly surveyed section of the Roman frontier followed the exact march of the Ten Thousand as related in Xenophon's *Anabasis* of 370 BC.



On Mitford's first visit to this place, "one of the most haunting scenes to come down to us from the ancient world", all he can see in the swirling mist is a sea of clouds a thousand feet below (though six miles later they


TIMOTHY BRUCE MITFORD

discover Xenophon's memorial cairn). Mitford's guide that day was Celal Yılmaz, whose family had climbed up to this high pass for three months every summer. His father and grandfather told Celal tales of the old days, of the 300-strong camel caravans that used to pass this way, en route from Trabzon to Erzurum, until 1945. The caravans had passed over the spot where Hadrian and Arrian had once themselves stood, marvelling at tales from the past, of Xenophon and his companions greeting the sea ("*Thalassa!*") as an old friend.

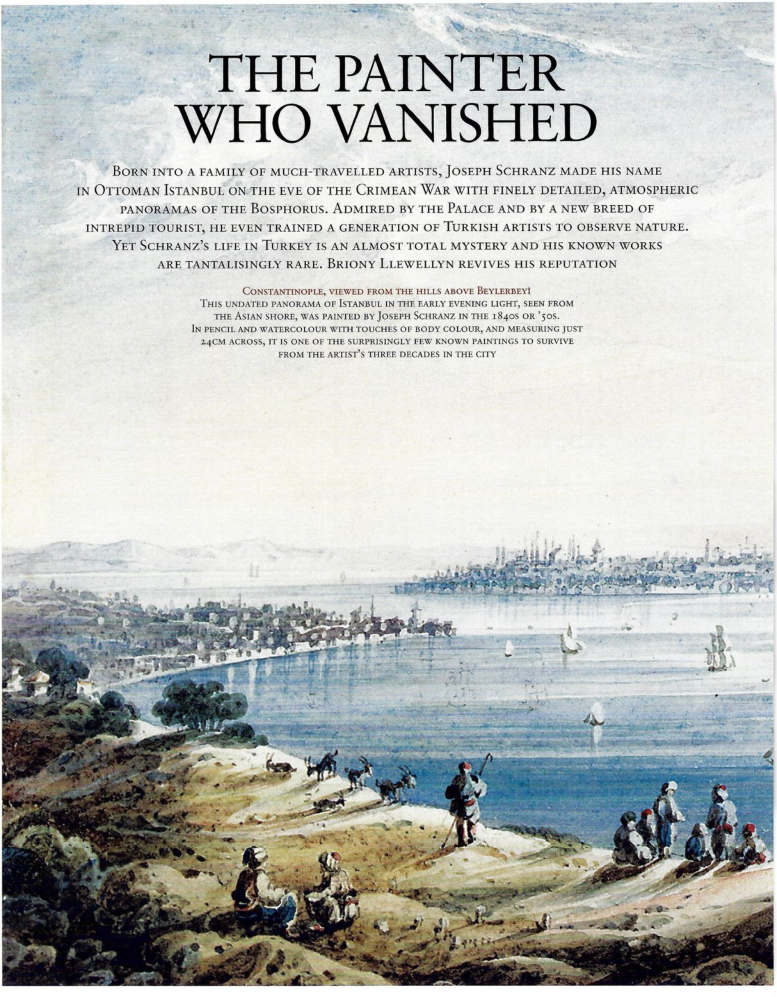
Thanks to Mitford we now join them. The hidden frontier has been found, and with this book, this achievement, Mitford needs no tombstone. ◆

Barnaby Rogerson is the author of 'In Search of Ancient North Africa: A History in Six Lives', Haus Publishing, £20

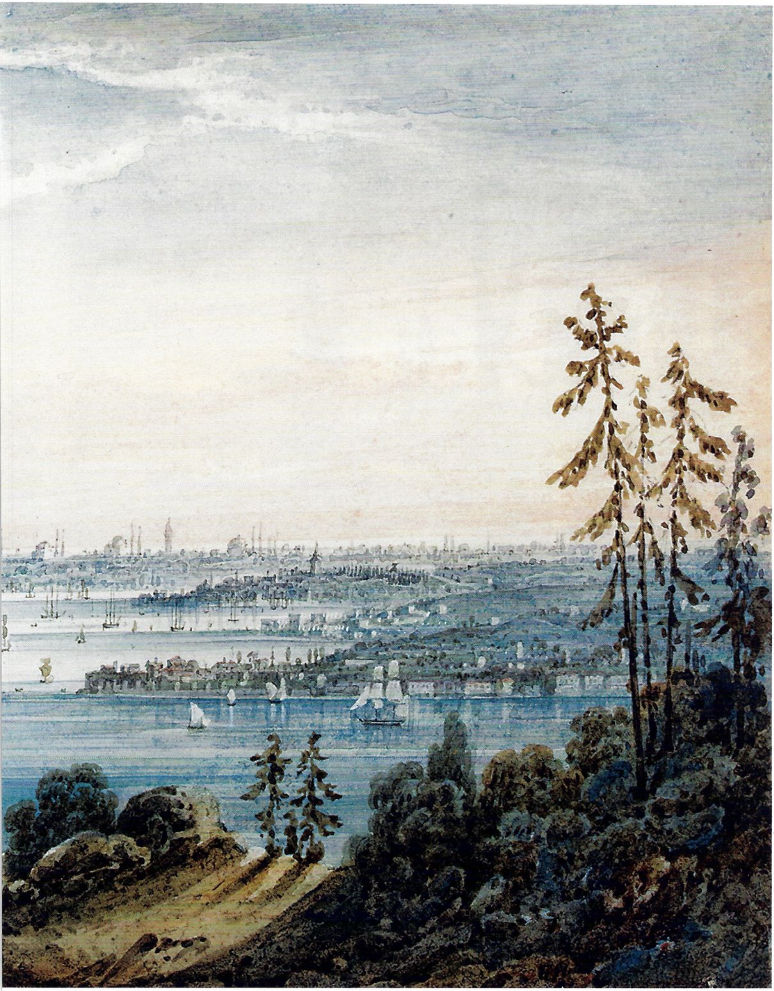
THE MAGNIFICENT SINGLE-SPAN BRIDGE OVER THE CENDERE SU (THE ANCIENT CHABINAS RIVER), REBUILT IN AD200 BY THE ROMAN LEGION XVI FLAVIA FIRMA (KNOWN AS THE SIXTEENTH) ON THE ORDERS OF EMPEROR SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS

THE PAINTER WHO VANISHED

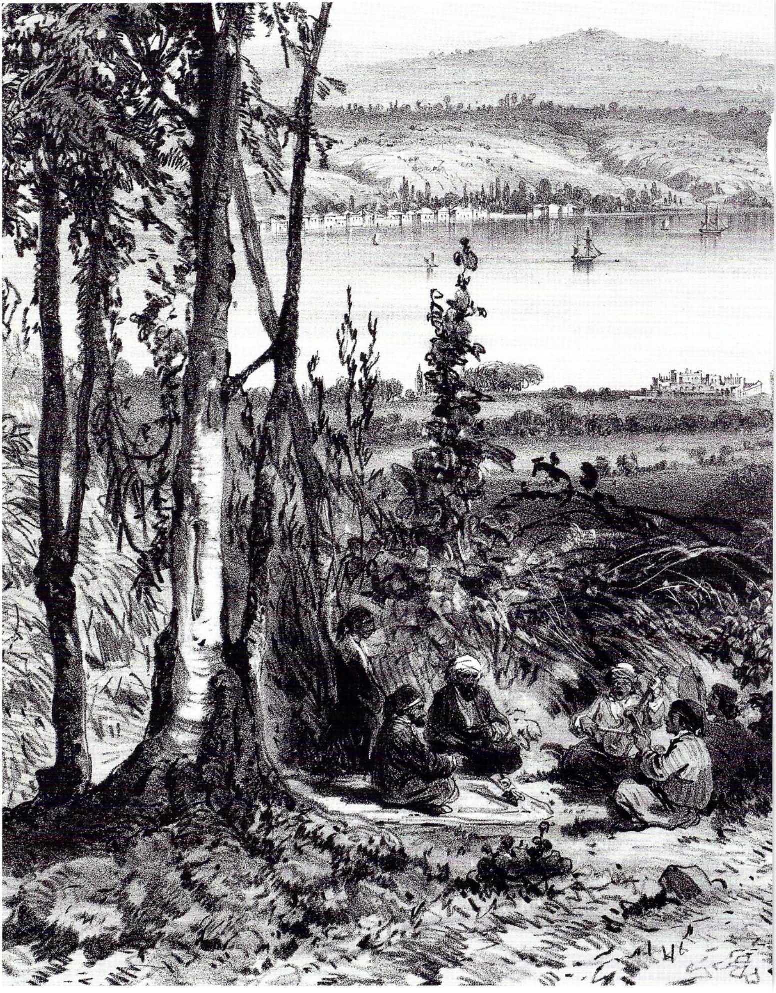
Born into a family of much-travelled artists, Joseph Schranz made his name in Ottoman Istanbul on the eve of the Crimean War with finely detailed, atmospheric panoramas of the Bosphorus. Admired by the Palace and by a new breed of intrepid tourist, he even trained a generation of Turkish artists to observe nature. Yet Schranz's life in Turkey is an almost total mystery and his known works are tantalisingly rare. Briony Llewellyn revives his reputation

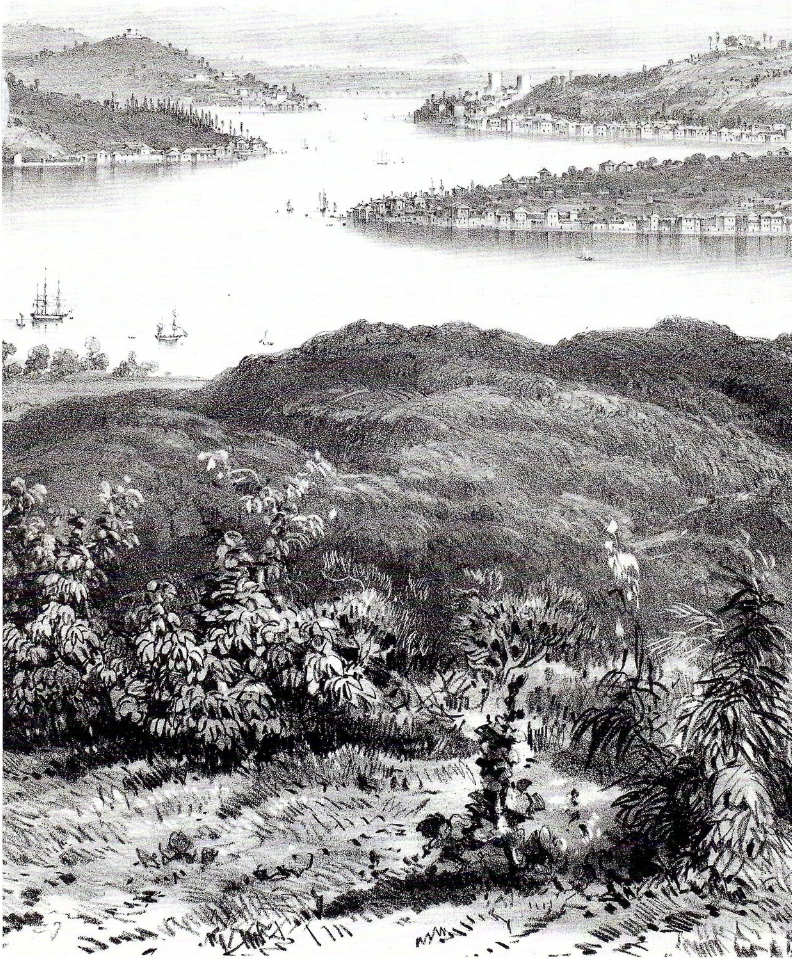


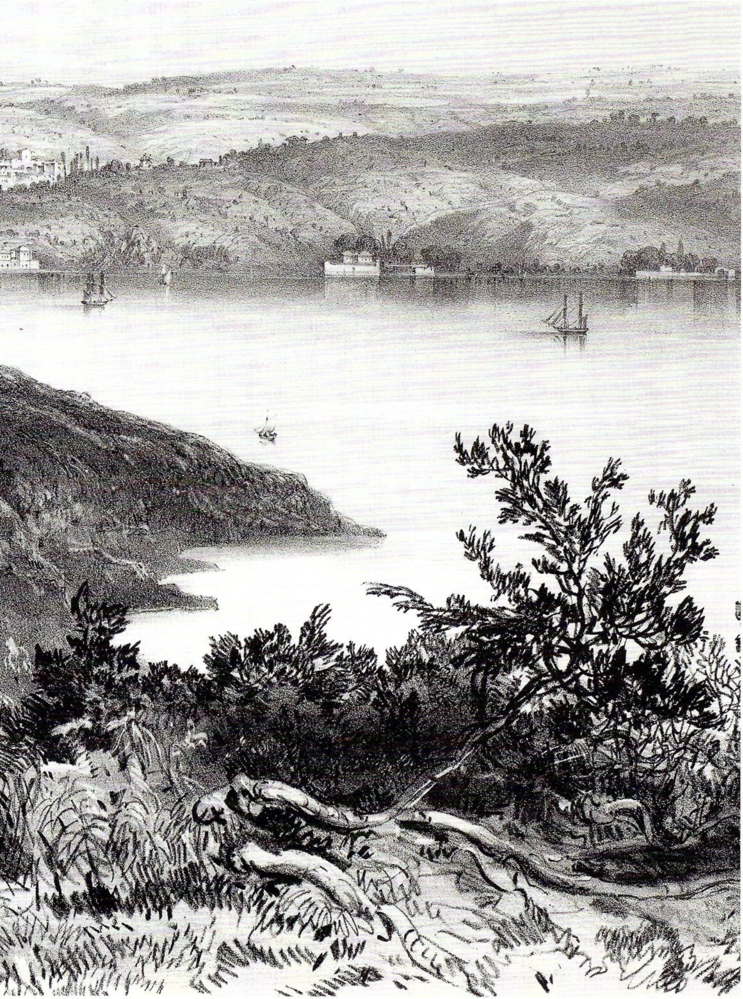
Constantinople, viewed from the hills above Beylerbeyi
This undated panorama of Istanbul in the early evening light, seen from the Asian shore, was painted by Joseph Schranz in the 1840s or '50s. In pencil and watercolour with touches of body colour, and measuring just 24cm across, it is one of the surprisingly few known paintings to survive from the artist's three decades in the city

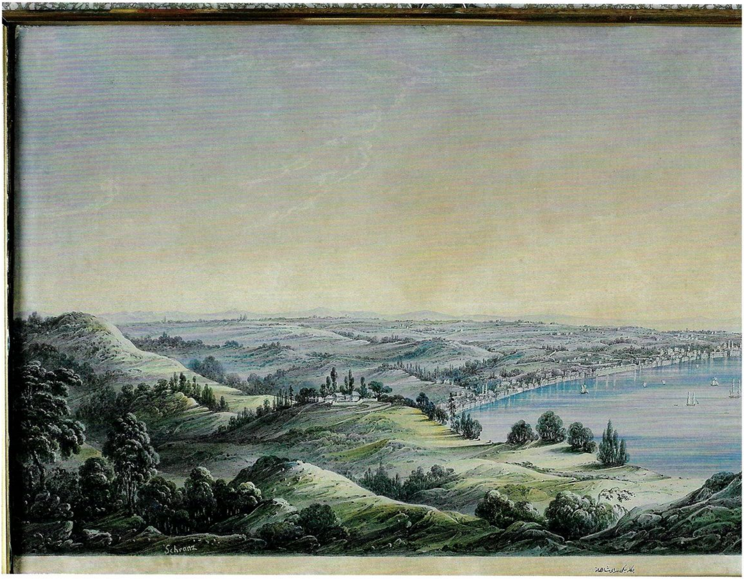


PRIVATE COLLECTION, COURTESY OF CHRISTIE'S









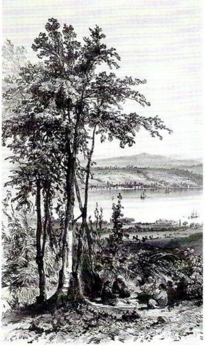
Sheet 1: Beylerbeyİ, Kuzguncuk and Üsküdar

Painting in pairs

Joseph Schranz is best known for his panoramic lithographs of the Bosphorus, which he produced in pairs in 1852 and 1853 after living in Istanbul for at least 16 years. So as to cover the entire strait from the Sea of Marmara in the south to the Black Sea in the north, he used two hilltop viewpoints, both on the Asian side: Kandilli, at the midway point, and Yuşa Tepe (Giant's Grave) in the north. His first pair of panoramas were large monochrome lithographs published in 1852 (right and pages 34–35). The elegiac panorama above, again one of a pair, is a watercolour that lay long forgotten in Topkapı Palace, known only to a handful of scholars.

Above The Bosphorus viewed from Kandilli
From a series of views in pencil and watercolour by Joseph Schranz, c1853, Topkapi Palace Collection

This large panorama (44 x 241cm) – on four sheets of paper, with Ottoman Turkish place names – was probably owned by the art-loving Sultan Abdülmecid.
Sheet 1 The view stretches along the Asian shore from Beylerbeyi, with the twin minarets of its waterside mosque, to Üsküdar (the Scutari of Crimean War fame) in the distance.
Sheet 2 Crossing to Europe, in the background are the Topkapı and the Old City with its silhouette of domes and minarets. Across the Golden Horn is the Galata Tower, landmark of Pera, the European quarter. In the centre ground are the villages of Ortaköy and Kuruçeşme, with its huge waterside Tırnakçızade Yalı to the right of the sheet.
Sheet 3 A steamer tows a sailing ship upstream past Arnavutköy. A string of yalıs then leads to the palace of Bebek Kasrı in front of the tall minaret of Bebek's mosque and a valley full of stately mansions
Sheet 4 The fort of Rumeli Hisarı dominates the narrowest stretch of the Bosphorus. In the foreground, in Asia, are Kandilli's rooftops. Far right is the peak of Yuşa Tepe (Giant's Grave)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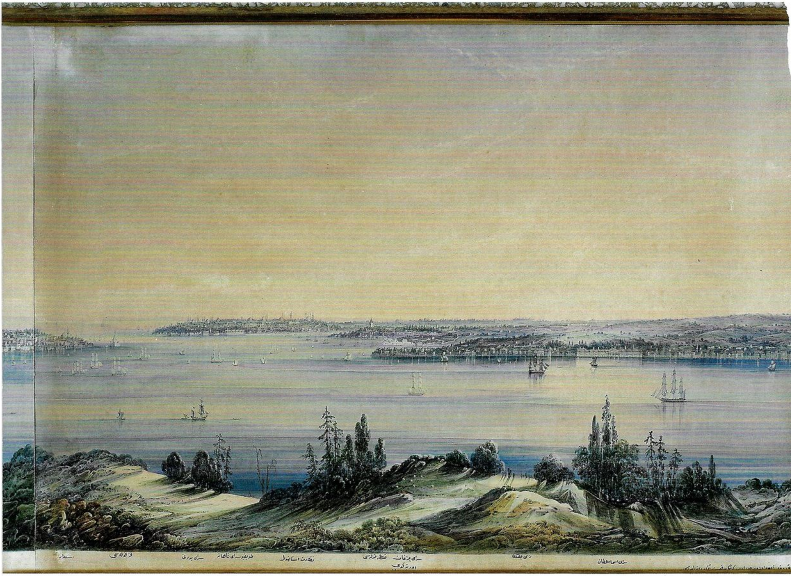
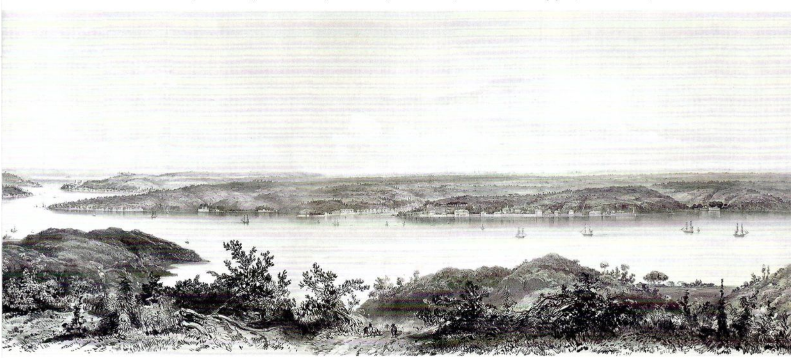
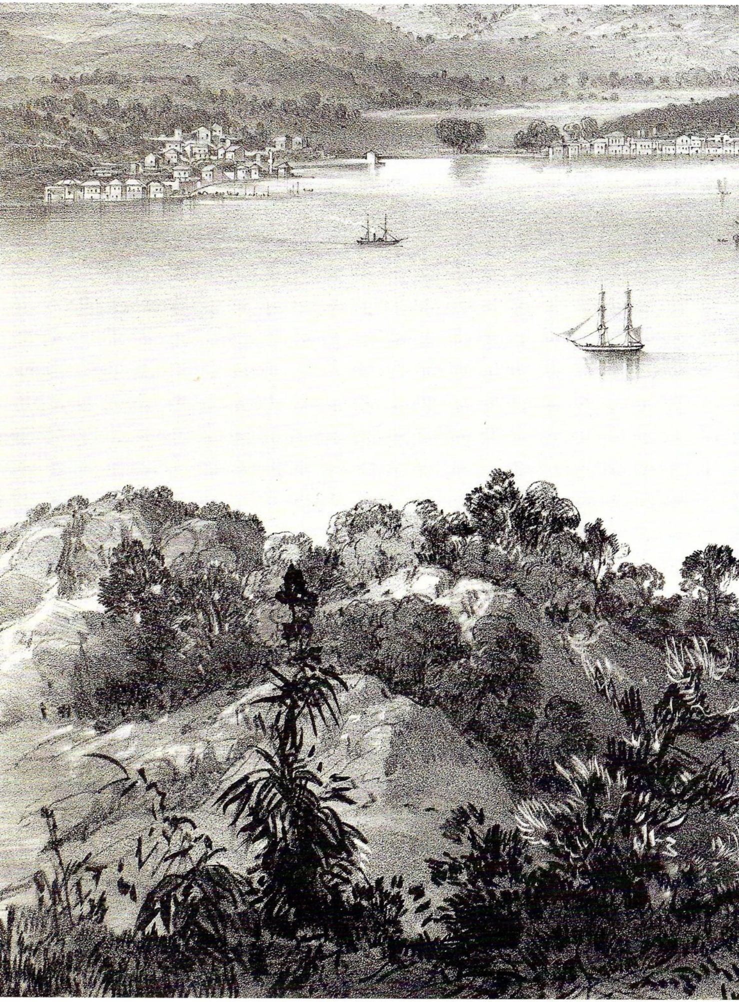
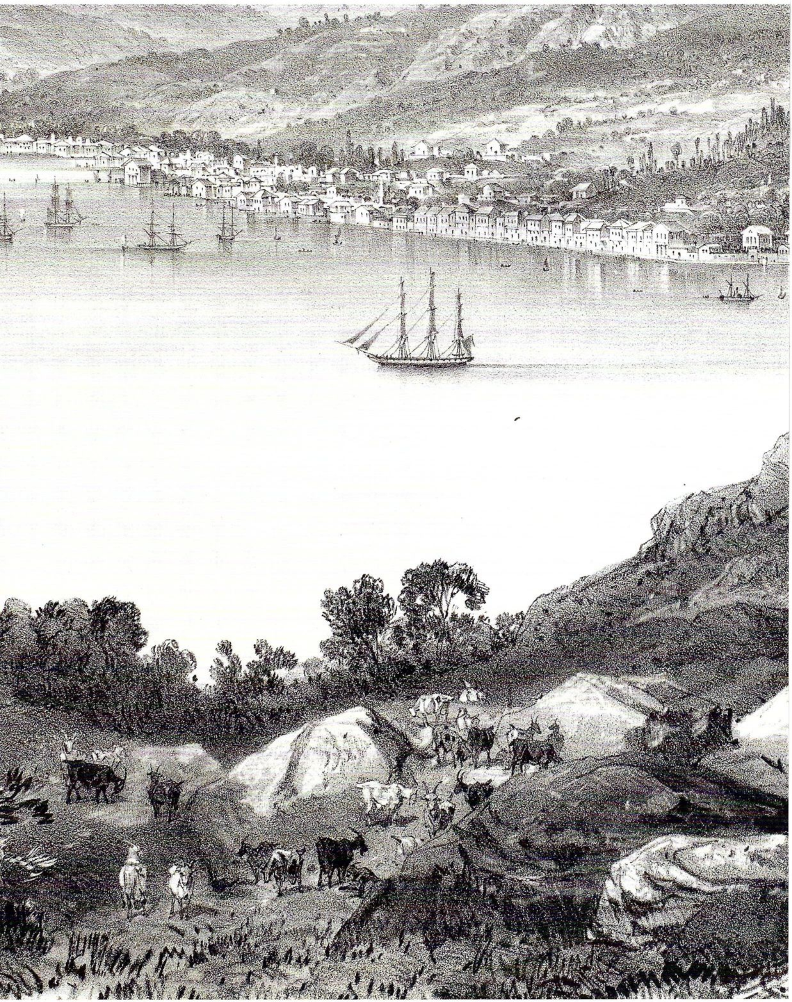
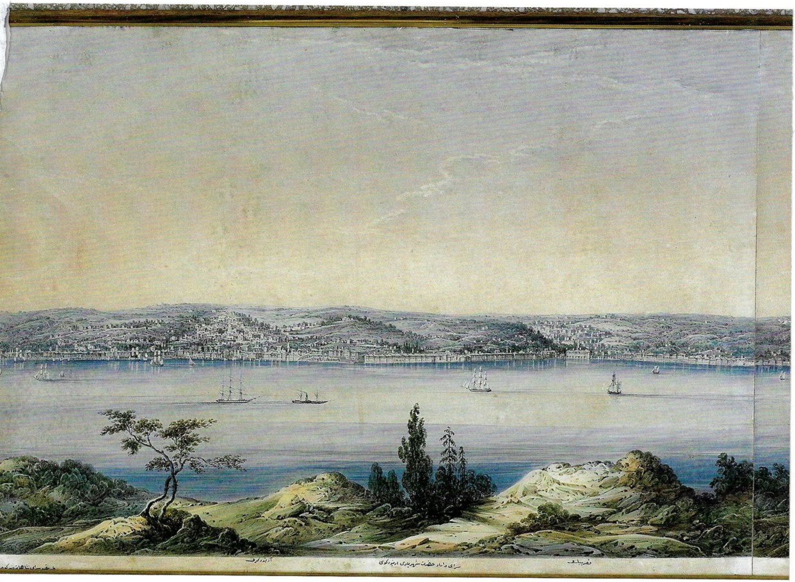


Sheet 2: Üsküdar and Leander's Tower (Asian shore); Topkapi Palace, the Old City, Galata Tower, Ortaköy and Kuruçeşme (European shore)

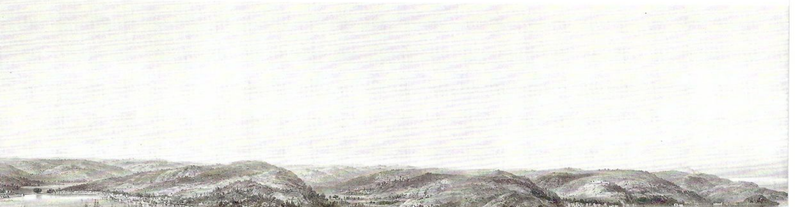


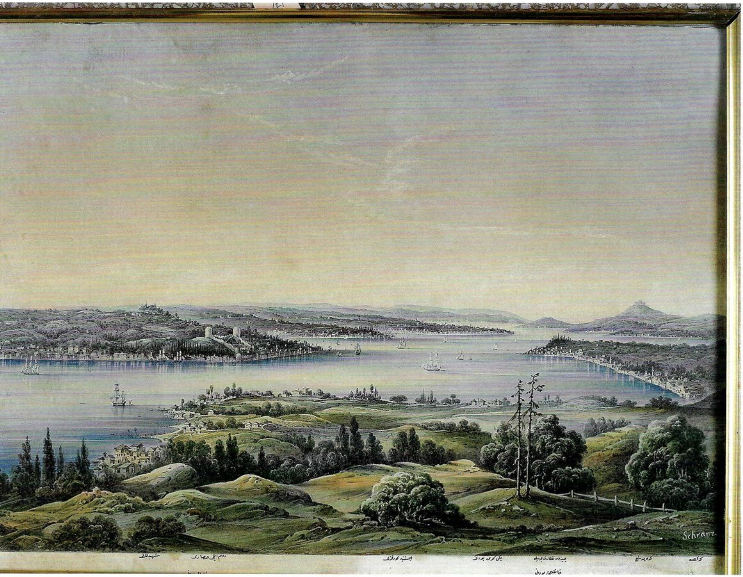





آرنبودكوى
سرای داماد حضرت شهریاری ارنبودکوی

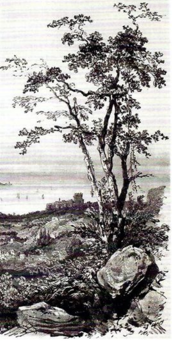
Sheet 3: Arnavutköy and Bebek





Sheet 4: Kandilli, Kanlica and Yuşa Tepe (Asian shore); Rumeli Hisari, Emirgan and Yeniköy (European shore)

TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM, ISTANBUL (17/753)

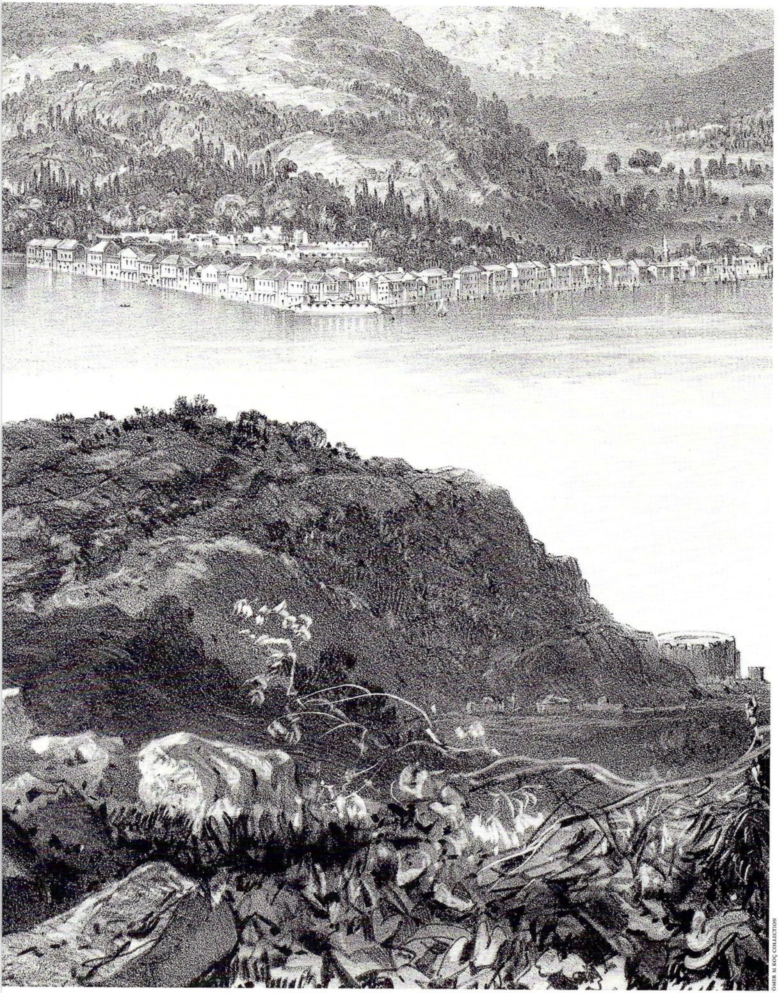


Left The view from Yuşa Tepe (Giant's Grave)
Lithographs from Joseph Schranz's 'Panorama du Bosphore', Constantinople, 1852

This panorama captures the upper Bosphorus from the fortress of Rumeli Hisarı and the hills of Kandilli on the left, to the Black Sea, with the Byzantine fortress of Yoros and the fishing village of Anadolukavağı in the foreground on the right. This is one of a pair of panoramas lithographed in Paris from Schranz's drawings on four separate sheets and published as a portfolio in 1852 by 'Monsieur Missirie', charismatic owner of the Hôtel d'Angleterre in Pera. Combined, as shown here, the four sheets measure 51 by 228cm

Previous pages A detail from Sheet 1 of the same 1852 panorama. In the centre of the picture, on a promontory of the European shore, is the village of Yeniköy; the towers of Rumeli Hisarı stand out on the promontory beyond. In the foreground on the left, on the Asian shore, the palace of Beykoz Kasrı, is still under construction. A gift from the Khedive of Egypt to Sultan Abdülmecid, it is seen completed in the oil painting of 1853–54 (pages 38–39)

Following pages A detail from Sheet 3 of the 1852 lithograph (left), this view includes the villages of Büyükdere and Sarıyer on the far, European shore. The lush wooded park in the centre drops down to the Neoclassical Russian summer embassy, a villa with flanking lodges that stands in its own gardens. Separated from the Bosphorus by a wall and a towpath, this is the only wooden house of all those recorded here by Schranz to survive



ÖMER M KOÇ COLLECTION

In June 1852, one Monsieur Missirie, proprietor of the Hôtel d'Angleterre in the Pera district of Constantinople, as Istanbul was then known, presented a bound album of works by Joseph Schranz (1803–1862/6) to Sultan Abdülmecid. Titled *Panorama du Bosphore*, this comprised two sets of four joined lithographs depicting the entire length of the Bosphorus.

In what was clearly an extravagant puff, the local French newspaper, *Journal de Constantinople*, waxed lyrical. Mr Schranz – a "distinguished artist who [had] lived in Constantinople for 16 years" – had had, it proclaimed, "the unique and happy idea of depicting, with the aid of a pencil, the magnificent panorama of the European shore that extends from one end to the other of the waterway". None of this would have been possible without "the princely magnificence" of Missirie. An "intelligent and generous enthusiast for the arts", Missirie had financed the lithography of the work in Paris by Léon Jean-Baptiste Sabatier (c1827–87), "one of the most justly celebrated artists in this genre". So delighted had the Sultan been with the gift of a "veritable masterpiece" that he had presented Missirie with a diamond-encrusted gold snuffbox. Art lovers seeking a "beautiful and precious souvenir" would be pleased to know that they could buy a copy of the work "at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, and at Christich, opposite the theatre".

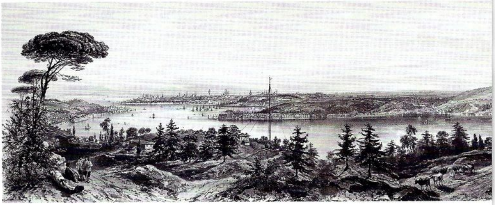
Missirie (or Mysseri) was the polyglot Greek servant and dragoman who, in 1834, had accompanied Alexander Kinglake, author of *Eothen*, on his travels in the Levant. He was the archetypal Levantine: of uncertain origin, speaking many languages, acquiring many roles – dragoman, hotelier, agent, print publisher – and, to add to all this, had married a British maid. He opened his hotel in around 1841, and it very soon became the favourite of British visitors, highly spoken of by Thackeray in 1844. In person, though, Missirie was more prosaic than the exotic figure conjured in *Eothen*. To another author, John Berwick Harwood, the "*maître d'hôtel*" cut a surprising figure. "I had expected to see a romantic and *farouche* Eastern, and was amazed to behold a stout middle-aged man, with light hair and whiskers, and whose ruddy face would have been selected by a Frenchman as a type of the thorough John Bull physiognomy… Moreover Mysseri's English is of the purest cockney dialect, his accent of the most genuine London stamp."

Still, Missirie's sales pitch apparently worked, since Schranz shortly afterwards produced another set of lithographs. This was *Le Bosphore*, comprising two slightly smaller fold-out panoramas, with the addition of single plates showing further views of the Bosphorus, of Smyrna (Izmir, page 41) and Brousse (Bursa), and of popular tourist "sights". Sabatier was, again, the lithographer, with Terry (probably Henry John Terry, 1818–80), but the publisher was Schranz himself with A. Percheron. The publication date was probably 1853, to judge by the presence of the Bashi-Bazouk irregulars among the figures on the shoreline and the number of ships along the Bosphorus, including the fleets of both Britain and France, which suggest preparations for a military and naval conflict – the Crimean War. A later edition includes an additional panorama and additional single plates in colour lithograph.

Another lithograph, on a large single sheet, *Mouillage des Flottes Anglo-Françaises Turque et Egyptienne dans le Bosphore*, titled also in English, depicts the Allied fleets at anchor. This was printed in Paris and published by Schranz and Percheron in Constantinople, probably in late 1853 or early 1854. The lithographers were Sabatier and Adolphe Jean-Baptiste Bayot (1810–71). Schranz's lithographs were also included in a slightly later composite publication, titled *Souvenir d'Orient* (c1856–60), along with works by the celebrated Maltese artist Amadeo Preziosi (1816–82) and the lesser-known Constantinople artist Jean Brindesi (1826–88).

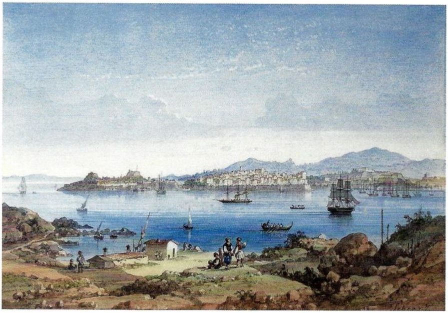
The works for which Joseph Schranz is best known, the 1850s lithographs, reflect a heightened British and French interest in Istanbul, fuelled by the outbreak of hostilities in Eastern Europe and Crimea. As the British and French military presence in

PANORAMA
DU
BOSPHORE



Panorama du Bosphore, 1852
BELOW AND BELOW RIGHT Joseph Schranz's celebrated first volume of Bosphorus panoramas, published in Constantinople by Missirie with lithographs by Léon Jean-Baptiste Sabatier of Paris. By 1852 Schranz had already spent 16 years in the city and must have made numerous studies of the waterway, though few have survived. This panorama is drawn from Kandilli, at the midway point of the Bosphorus. The hills on the near, Asian side are more prominent and picturesque than in the Sultan's watercolour (gatefold, previous pages)

ABOVE RIGHT VIEW OF CORFU FROM THE ISLAND OF VIDO, C1828
Painted during Joseph (then Giuseppe) Schranz's first recorded painting trip abroad, this watercolour (20.3 x 29.9cm) reveals a precocious talent



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Istanbul increased, so did a demand for images of the city and its people, from which Schranz was but one to profit.

At that time there were a number of foreign artists living and working in the Levantine community of Pera and Galata, enjoying a hybrid identity as they straddled the boundaries between East and West. Theirs was a milieu within which the *Journal*'s "distinguished artist" J. Schranz would have felt quite at home, coming, as he had, from Malta, an island that had been subject to occupiers of multiple nationalities. Schranz probably spoke Spanish, Italian, French and English, as well as Ottoman Turkish. His national identity was fluid, though the family regarded themselves as Spanish. If a Maltese citizen, he would have been under the jurisdiction of the British Embassy; there is no evidence of any formal connections with the British community, but it is easy to picture him among the multilingual Levantine communities in Pera, across the Golden Horn from the Old City, or Stamboul as it was then known.

Joseph (born Giuseppe) was the youngest and arguably the most talented of the three artist sons of Anton Schranz the Elder (1769–1839), a native of Ochsenhausen, at that time part of Austria. They were a much-travelled family, moving from Mahón in Menorca to Malta in 1818, four years after its transformation from British protectorate to Crown colony. Its location at the centre of the Mediterranean gave it great strategic importance as a naval base, enabling Anton and his eldest son, Giovanni, to make a good living as marine artists, with commissions from British naval officers and local Maltese patrons.

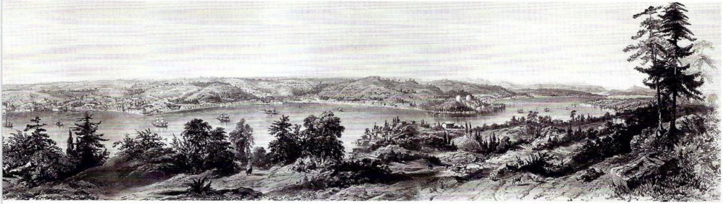
However, the economic situation on Malta was unstable. The island had been hit by a series of disasters, including the plague of 1813, which had precipitated mass migrations that saw Maltese communities take root in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, notably in Istanbul. So when Giovanni, Antonio and Giuseppe Schranz began to contemplate their next move, it was natural that they should look east.

Giuseppe's first known expedition outside Malta began on June 15, 1826, when he and Giovanni left for Corfu. Giuseppe returned to Malta five months later. He then left for the Ionian island of Zante (Zakynthos) on October 1, 1828. Several examples exist of his fine topographical watercolours of Corfu (left) and Zante, as well as Athens, which display his sure grasp of aerial perspective, his skilled handling of tonal harmonies and his eye for landscape detail.

After his Greek sojourn, by 1836 (as suggested by the *Journal* puff), and possibly a year or two before, he was at work in the Ottoman capital, executing some extraordinarily detailed pencil drawings of the city and the Bosphorus shoreline. Their remarkable delicacy and accuracy reveal a self-assured artist with considerable powers of draughtsmanship. One of the earlier examples is on a sheet watermarked 1833; another, on a mount watermarked 1849, is inscribed in a later hand on the old mount, "by Schranz of Constantinople".

In 1838, Selim Satı Pasha, director of the Military Academy, the Mekteb-i Harbiye, reported that "the renowned and ingenious Spanish painter, *Mösyö Şirans* [Monsieur Schranz], was appointed to the Professorship of Drawing", adding in a footnote that he was "skilled in pencil drawings, watercolours, and in landscape pictures". The academy had begun taking graduates from the new Military High School at Kuleli, near Kandilli, one of Schranz's favourite vantage points on the Asian shore. In 1849 the *Journal de Constantinople* reported that Schranz and his French Levantine colleague Pierre Guès (d 1887) were holding an exhibition of the work of students from both institutions, one of the first such in Turkey.

Schranz's teaching duties must have left him little time for other work. A recently rediscovered album, however, does suggest that he had naval connections that resulted in a commission, or at least a sale. Ten of his pencil drawings, bound in an album entitled *Views of Smyrna and the Bosphorus*, were once owned by the King family of Loxwood House, Sussex. One of the drawings, a view over the district of Beşiktaş to the Seraglio (above), is inscribed "Schrantz. Fecit. 1841", and all bear annotations in the margins, some possibly



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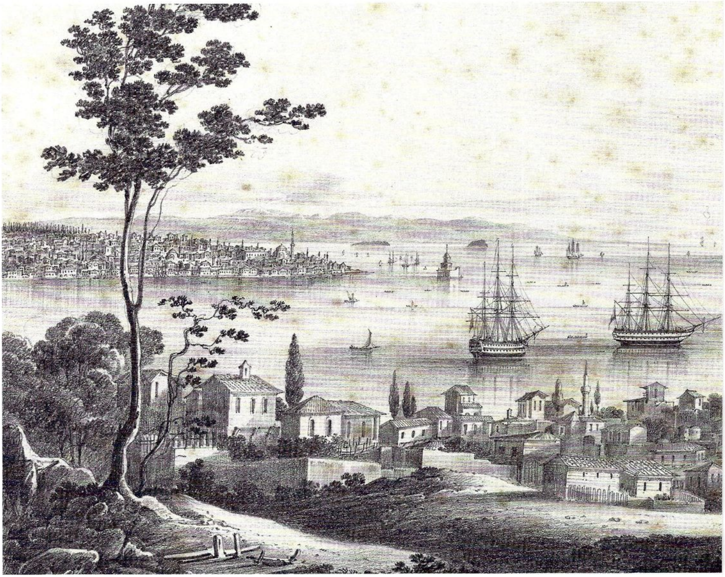


ABOVE CONSTANTINOPLE, 1841
Schranz usually worked on the Asian shore. This is a rare view from Europe, with Beşiktaş in the foreground and the Topkapı on the right. On the Asian side we see Üsküdar and a distant Mt Olympus (Uludağ). The panorama is from *Views of Smyrna and the Bosphorus*, a bound album of ten drawings belonging to the King family of Loxwood House, Sussex

OPPOSITE THE BOSPHORUS, 1841
A detail from another drawing in the album, with the British fleet keeping a close watch on a Russian encampment at Hünkâr İskelesi

FOLLOWING PAGES
THE ANGLO-FRENCH FLEET AT ANCHOR IN THE BOSPHORUS, NOVEMBER 1853
This rare Schranz oil (87.5 x 132.5cm), painted in 1853 or 1854, now hangs in Ankara's British Embassy. It shows the Allied fleet on the upper Bosphorus, on its way to the Crimean War. On the left is the newly completed Beykoz Kasrı

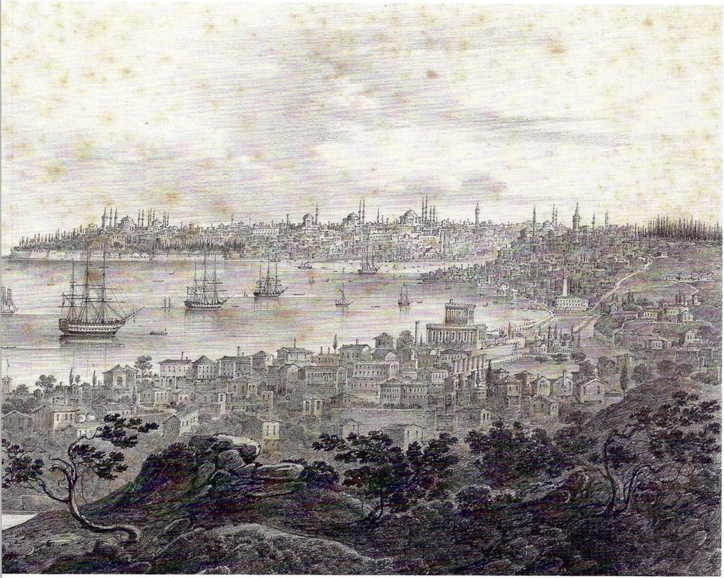
by Schranz himself, some in later hands.

Another drawing, *Russian Encampment at Hunkiar Skellessi, 1841*, shows ships anchored off Büyükdere, possibly British ones, stationed there to observe the Russian camp on the Asian shore (see detail, opposite). The London Straits Convention of that year had barred all warships from entering the Bosphorus except those of the Sultan's allies, of whom Britain was one.

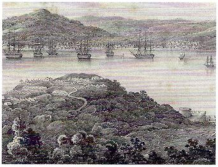
While Schranz's surviving depictions of Istanbul are far rarer than those of the Ionian Islands, other artists had greater leisure to cater to the Western tourists to whom improved rail and steam transport made the city increasingly accessible. The existence of a group of somewhat formulaic watercolours that bear at least a superficial resemblance to Schranz's work has encouraged the attribution to a "circle" or "school" of Joseph Schranz.

Frances Anne, Marchioness of Londonderry, collected a handful of these as mementoes in Constantinople in 1840 (page 40). Along with three ink-and-wash drawings, probably by Giovanni Schranz, she had them pasted into her travel journal. It is tempting to imagine that Joseph Schranz had an organised workshop outside the military schools, but no evidence of it has materialised. Another attractive suggestion has been to link these watercolours with the female members of the family, since Schranz's mother, Isabella (Elisabetta), and two of his sisters, Margherita and Francesca, are also recorded as travelling to Constantinople at various times between 1836 and 1841, including one stay of 18 months and another of three years by Margherita. It is possible that they too were artists, but again this is conjecture.

Joseph Schranz's work fits comfortably within the topographical traditions in Europe, but with its big skies and detailed depiction of distant landscapes, often without figures, it stands apart from the homely picturesque aesthetic that characterised the work of British travelling artists such



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH (PAI4874)



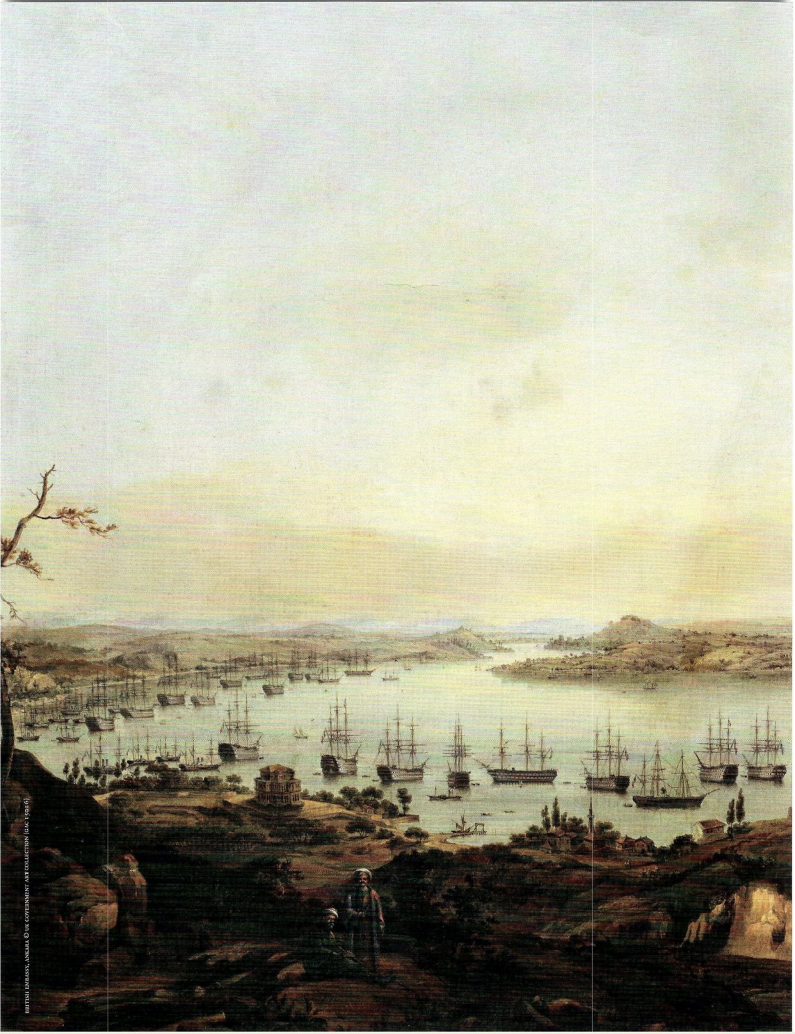
NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH (PAI4879)

as William Bartlett (1809–1854) and Thomas Allom (1804–1872), both of whom visited Constantinople in the late 1830s. Commissioned by their publishers to play to popular interest in Ottoman Turkey, their work portrays a city hardly touched by the recent modernising reforms of the Tanzimat decrees, exciting and alluring, exotic but not alien, sometimes dilapidated but never squalid, and always thoroughly picturesque.

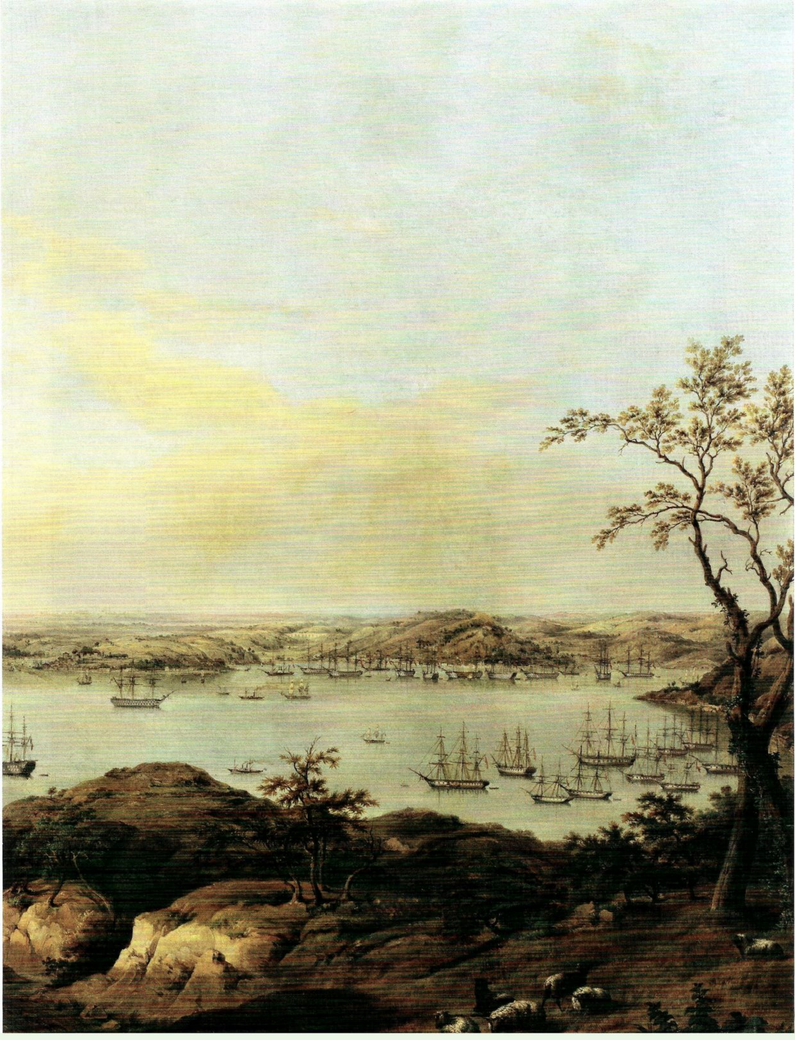
With the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853, European fascination with Turkey reached fever pitch. Schranz profited from this, but only modestly compared with certain of his contemporaries, among them Amadeo Preziosi. Amadeo, 5th Count Preziosi, born into one of the foremost Roman Catholic Maltese families, found fame in Ottoman Turkey as an artist who portrayed with colour and panache the life and landscape of Constantinople for European visitors, from the royal and aristocratic to middle-class tourists.

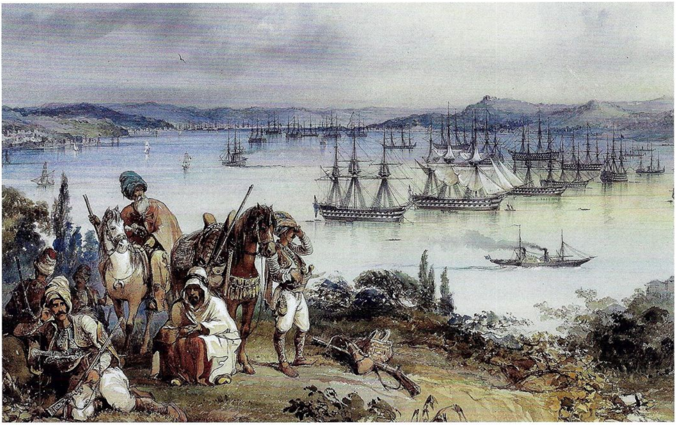
At the onset of war, the newly ennobled British ambassador, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, commissioned from Preziosi two large watercolours documenting the gathering of the British and Allied forces. In one of these impressive works, Preziosi depicts, with a characteristic flair for lively anecdote, an encampment of troops from the 1st Division of the British Army at Scutari (Üsküdar) on the Asian side of the Bosphorus. The other (page 40) shows the mighty Allied fleet peacefully anchored in the upper Bosphorus; armed figures from the far reaches of the Ottoman Empire dominate the scene. These watercolours stand in contrast to Schranz's panoramas, over which war casts a more subtle shadow.

In the Topkapı Palace Collection are some of Schranz's finest works, suggesting that they, as well as the lithographs, were acquired by Sultan Abdülmecid. Executed on an impressive scale, they too show Bosphorus panoramas. Two, drawn in fine pencil, each consist of four sheets and are signed by Schranz. One is inscribed: "*Panorama du Bosphore de Serail Bournou jusqu'au Mont de Géant Prise du Igiadié Kiosk en Asie*"; the other, "*Panorama du Bosphore depuis l'Entrée de la Mer Noire jusqu'au village de Kandilli Prise du Mont Géant*". Similarities of topography and titles suggest they were preparatory drawings for the 1852 lithographs. A further two sets are watercolours, both signed "Schranz" and inscribed in Ottoman Turkish with place



BRITISH EMBASSY, ANKARA © UK GOVERNMENT ART COLLECTION (GAC 15016)





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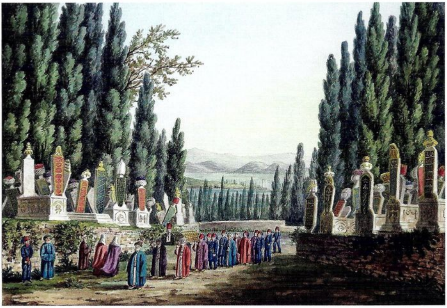
names (see gatefold, pages 32–33). Painted in muted tones of blue, green and grey, these again demonstrate Schranz's considerable skill in handling aerial perspective while retaining the accuracy of the pencil drawings. The foreground shadows cast by the evening light create an elegiac mood. The absence of warships suggests a date either just before the Crimean War, c1852, or afterwards, post-1856. Topographically they are closer to the second set of lithographs, published by Schranz and Percheron c1853.

Two further panoramas in pencil are known. These also comprise four joined sheets. They are inscribed beneath the image with place names in Italian, probably by Schranz himself. Like the watercolours in the Topkapı, their topography is closer to that of the lithographs published by Schranz and Percheron, and again it is likely that they are the preparatory drawings.

The views of the Bosphorus from Yuşa Tepe (Joshua Hill, often known as the Giant's Grave or Mont Géant), including the bay of Beykoz and Hünkâr İskelesi, were favoured by Schranz, no doubt for their significance during the Crimean War and their consequent commercial value. In addition to a pencil drawing in the Loxwood album, at least three worked-up watercolours are known, but without the Allied fleet at anchor. These, with their wide expanses of sky, land and sea brought together by harmonious tonalities, are among Schranz's most successful compositions. With the removal of the topical reference, a more



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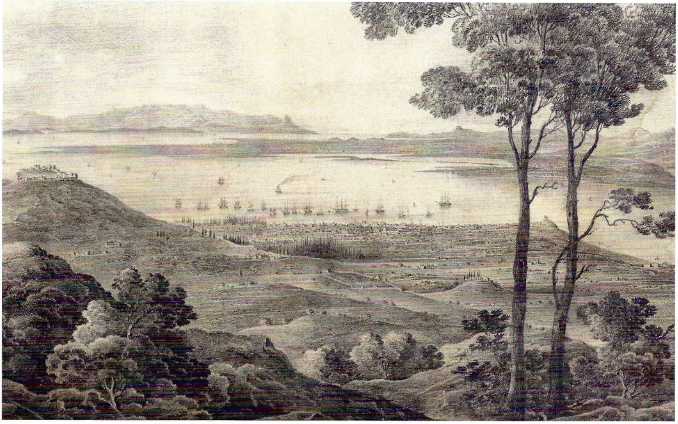
ABOVE THE CEMETERY AT SCUTARI
The Marchioness of Londonderry's journal of her visit in 1840 includes this watercolour view of Karacaahmet Cemetery. The unknown artist seems to be working in Schranz's style

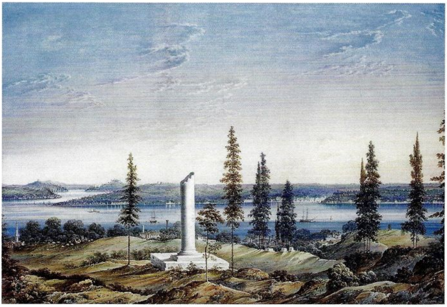
TOP 'THE ALLIED FLEETS AT ANCHOR IN THE BOSPHORUS, 1853'
A watercolour painted in 1854 is one of a pair painted by Schranz's Maltese compatriot Amadeo, 5th Count Preziosi, for the British ambassador, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe

OPPOSITE, TOP THE GULF OF SMYRNA, c1840
Joseph Schranz far exceeded his siblings in draughtsmanship. This detail of a drawing (43.5 x 66.5cm) shows the Aegean port of Izmir, with the fort of Kadife Kale on the left

OPPOSITE, BELOW THE BOSPHORUS FROM YUŞA TEPE (GIANT'S GRAVE), WITH A BROKEN COLUMN
This watercolour, signed 'Schranz' in the lower right corner, was painted in the 1840s or '50s (41 x 59cm). The significance of the column, presumably imaginary, remains a mystery



PRIVATE COLLECTION, GREECE



ÖMER M KOÇ COLLECTION

poetic, timeless mood is achieved. A handful of other impressive watercolours of Constantinople and the Bosphorus exist, but considering the many years he was resident there these are tantalisingly scarce.

Scarce, too, are the known facts of Schranz's domestic life. Many foreign and Levantine artists had homes and studios in Pera, or nearby, including Preziosi and Brindesi as well as Guès, Schranz's fellow instructor at the military schools, but, although it is likely, there is nothing to prove that Schranz did so too. Schranz's lithographs appeared in *Souvenir d'Orient* alongside works by Preziosi and Brindesi in or after 1856, but this does not establish for sure that the artists themselves collaborated. Since the lithographs had all appeared previously, in Preziosi's *Stamboul: Recollections of Eastern Life* (1858), in Brindesi's *Souvenirs de Constantinople* (1855–1860) and in Schranz's *Le Bosphore* (c1855), the publishers could have collated the images independently. That said, it seems inconceivable that there would not have been some sort of professional interaction between Schranz and the other Frankish artists working in the city, whether in friendship or as rivals. Inhabiting the cosmopolitan world of Levantine Pera, they traversed its many cultures, and both absorbed and reflected the heterogeneity of 19th-century Constantinople.

Preziosi had travelled to Paris to oversee the production of the colour lithographs for *Stamboul*. An old inscription on the backboard of a watercolour of Constantinople, "By J. Schranz of Paris", if correct, implies that Joseph not only did the same but that he may have remained there for some time.

As much of Joseph Schranz's life eludes us, so, in dying, he gives us the slip. The date of his death is uncertain. No grave has ever been found for him in Istanbul or elsewhere. ◆

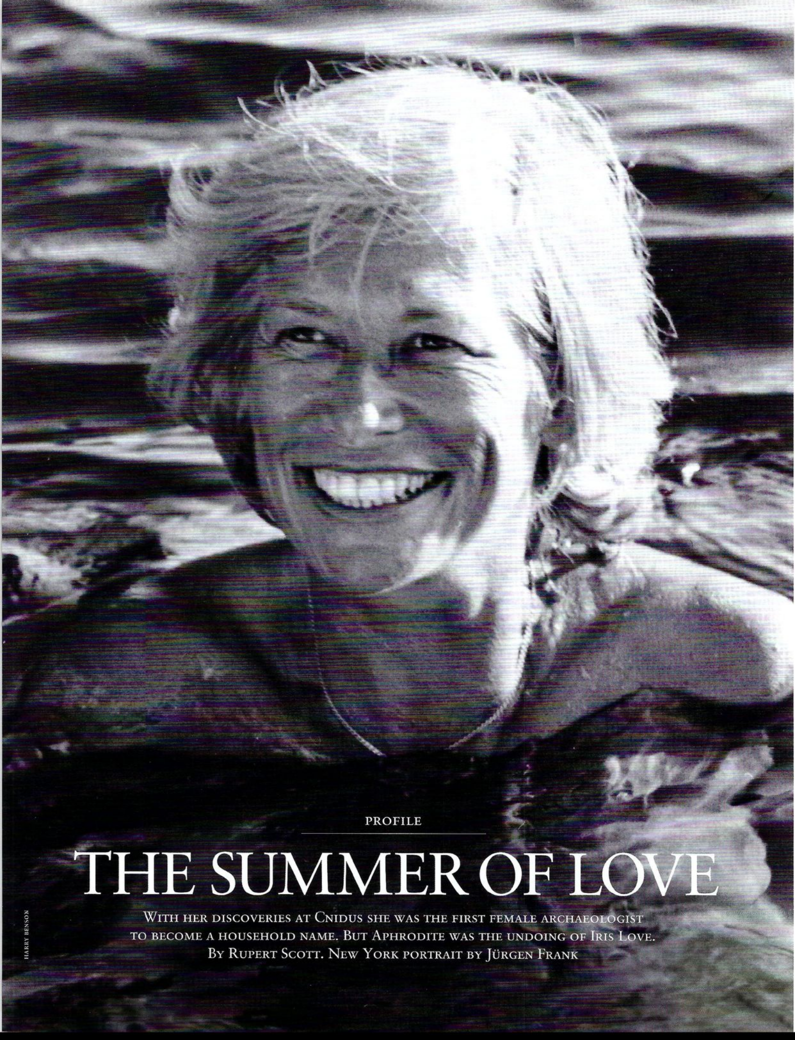
Special thanks for their help to Dr Banu Mahir, Charles Newton and John Schranz

BRIONY LLEWELLYN *is an independent scholar specialising in depictions of the Ottoman world. For other articles, see cornucopia.net*

The Schranz Family of Artists: A Journey of Rediscovery is at Fort St Elmo, Malta, until July 17, 2018. *Celebrating 200 Years of Schranz* is published by FPM, Malta (€95)

'For a young lecturer in a notoriously jealous field, Iris was dangerously famous. Academia did not take kindly to this kind of success, particularly in 1970 and particularly in a woman'

Iris Love with Apollo, New York, 2018.
Opposite: Love making a splash in the Aegean in the 1970s



PROFILE

THE SUMMER OF LOVE

With her discoveries at Cnidus she was the first female archaeologist to become a household name. But Aphrodite was the undoing of Iris Love.

By Rupert Scott. New York portrait by Jürgen Frank

HARRY BENSON

At the very tip of the Reşadiye peninsula, almost at the line where the Aegean becomes the Mediterranean, lies the Ancient city of Cnidus (Knidos). It is now ruined and deserted but in ancient times it was at the centre of the world, on trade routes from Alexandria to Athens, and a shelter from the prevailing northwesterly winds. Bleached by the sun, scorched by the wind, surrounded by the turquoise sea, it is a harsh, sometimes bleak, but at the same time an intensely romantic, site. The moles and walls of the trireme harbour still stand. Fragments of column and cornice are scattered amongst the rocks and dark-green, wind-sculpted bushes of the maquis. In spring the ground is a carpet of wild flowers amongst shards of ancient earthenware.

High above the site, looking east to Kos, south to Nisyros, west to Rhodes and Symi, is the stepped base of a circular temple. Its discovery, made in July 1969, and announced to a stunned annual conference of the Archaeological Institute of America in San Francisco in the last days of that year, briefly became world news. It propelled a young archaeologist, Iris Cornelia Love, to the kind of fame very few archaeologists achieve. She believed she had found the site of the temple that once housed Praxiteles' statue of Venus Aphrodite, perhaps the most famous statue of the ancient world and one of Pliny's Seven Wonders. If her thesis was correct, this was one the greatest archaeological coups of the century.

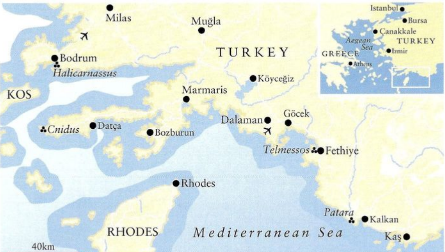
It is no exaggeration to say that for a short time, and while still in her thirties, Iris Love became the most famous archaeologist in the world and the first and only female household name in archaeology. The discovery appeared sensational, but it was the glamorous archaeologist herself – tall, blonde, handsome, self-confident and a close relation of the Guggenheims to boot – that really caught the imagination of the world. Iris Love seemed a shaft of sunlight in a fusty, male-dominated world. She found herself on the front page of *The New York Times* (bronzed and in the skimpiest of minidresses), on prime-time national television being interviewed by Barbara Walters, and the subject of profiles in scores of other magazines and newspapers around the world. Tabloids ran headlines such as "Love Finds Temple of Love" and referred to her as "the mini-skirted archaeologist".

However, her fame has proved short-lived. Today, Iris Love's excavations at Cnidus, if not forgotten, seem deliberately unacknowledged. The interpretive board beside the temple she discovered reads "The Round Temple Terrace, Second Century AD". There is no mention of either Iris Love or Aphrodite. It is interesting to ask what, in the almost half-century from discovery to the present day, has caused her name to be forgotten to archaeology.

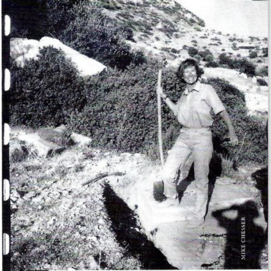
Iris Love is now 84, but looks and moves like a woman a decade younger. She lives between New York's Upper East Side and her house in Lincoln, Vermont. She has become famous for her love of dachshunds, which she breeds and is rarely seen without. I am meeting her for lunch, and she steps out from the yellow cab on Fifth Avenue holding a bag in the shape of a dachshund. Over lunch she tells me the remarkable story of how she came to organise and direct archaeological campaigns at Cnidus every year from 1967 to 1977.

Iris Love was brought up on the Upper East Side, the child of successful, well-connected parents who were serious art collectors. She showed a precocious talent for languages (particularly Latin) and an early interest in archaeology. On graduating

GRIT AND GLAMOUR IRIS LOVE MADE MANY DISCOVERIES IN HER DECADE OF DIGS AT CNIDUS FROM 1967. MOST CONTROVERSIAL IS THE CIRCULAR TEMPLE SHE INSISTS ONCE HOUSED PRAXITELES' VENUS APHRODITE, ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. SHE HERSELF ATTRACTED HUGE ATTENTION AT THE TIME

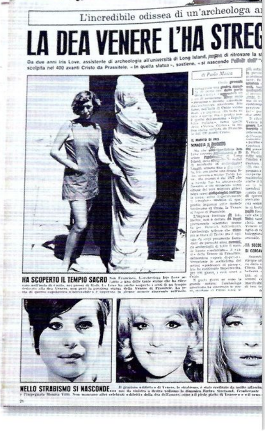


SUSANNA HICKLING



MIKE CHESSER

MIKE CHESSER



L'incredibile odissea di un'archeologa a

LA DEA VENERE L'HA STREG

Da due anni Iris Love, assistente di archeologia all'università di Long Island, [illegible] di ritrovare la s
scolpita nel 400 avanti Cristo da Prassitele. « In quella statua », sostiene, « si nasconde [illegible]

di Paolo Mosca

HA SCOPERTO IL TEMPIO SACRO

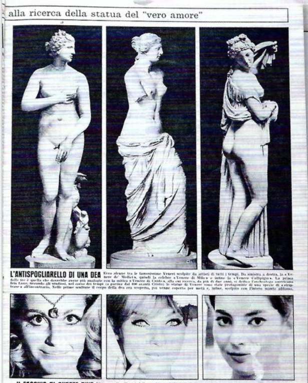
NELLO STRABISMO SI NASCONDE...

SIDNEY STAFFORD

HOLLAND TAYLOR

DVANCE FOR TUESDAY AMS, SEPTEMBER 15 USE WITH LOVE STORY BY NICK LUDINGTON)
Y 2-SEPT.14) LOVE SEEKS NAKED APHRODITE ON ISLE OF KNIDOS-Prof. Iris Love, an archeologist fro
ong Island University, shows astronaut Walter Schirra around excavations of the ancient Greek
emple of Aphrodite on the Isle of Knidos, now in Turkey. Schirra is to narrate a television
rogram on work at the site. One of the items Prof. Love hopes to find, is a statue by the Greek
culptor Praxyteles of a nude Aphrodite, the goddess of love. The statue was world-famous in its
me and was the first Greek female nude of ancient times.(AP Wirephoto) (gr/hmb20500stf)1970.

AP WIRE PHOTO



alla ricerca della statua del "vero amore"

L'ANTISPOGLIARELLO DI UNA DEA Ecco alcune tra le famosissime Veneri scolpite da artisti di tutti i tempi. Da sinistra a destra, la «Venere de' Medici», quindi la celebre «Venere di Milo» e infine la «Venere Callipigia». La prima delle tre è quella che dovrebbe avere più analogie con la mitica «Venere di Cnido», alla cui ricerca, da più di due anni, si dedica l'archeologa americana Iris Love. Secondo gli studiosi, nel corso dei tempi (a partire dal 400 avanti Cristo) le statue di Venere sono state protagoniste di una specie di «strip-tease» all'incontrario. Nelle prime sculture il corpo della dea era scoperto, poi venne coperto per metà e, infine, scolpito con l'intero manto addosso.

...IL FASCINO DI QUESTE DIVE Altre «eredi» illustri dello strabismo di Venere sono da sinistra a destra: la pre[illegible] e televisiva Gabriella Farinon; l'ex «fidanzata» di Vittorio Gassman, Annette Stroyberg; l'indime[illegible] «Gwendalina», Jacqueline Sassard. Le autorità turche mantengono il più assoluto riserbo circa la situazione degli scavi effettuati a Cnido dall'archeologa Iris Love.

27

JILL KREMENTZ

TÜRKIYE
1159

IRIS LOVE

from Smith College, she worked as an assistant at Cooper Union, and for nine summers from 1955 to 1963 as an assistant on the university's summer dig in Samothrace in the northern Aegean. She won her spurs as a field archaeologist by studying and preparing for exhibition ceramic fragments found in the building fill in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods. These were published in the Bollingen series on Samothrace. It was only in 1966, while working as an assistant professor at Long Island University, and still in her early thirties, that she was inspired to organise her own expedition, to Cnidus in Asia Minor.

"There had been no excavations at Cnidus since 1858," she says, "when an expedition from the British Museum under Charles Newton had spent more than a year there, following his campaign in Bodrum. This expedition had made some spectacular finds – the famous Lion of Cnidus now in the British Museum Great Court, for instance, statues discovered in the Sanctuary of Demeter and others from a tomb on the island part of the city. But I had a sense that there was still a great deal to discover. The ruins extend over a huge area."

Nowadays it is almost impossible to imagine how a relatively inexperienced archaeologist still only in her early thirties could have obtained permission to excavate such a major site. But things were different in the 1960s. More than 50 archaeological digs from US universities were taking place in Turkey at the time. George Bass, from Texas A&M University in Houston, was pioneering marine archaeology off the coast of Lycia. The spirit of international archaeological cooperation was strong, and nowhere stronger than between Turkey and the United States. In 1966 Iris visited the Ministry of Antiquities in Ankara, requesting permission to excavate at Cnidus. This was granted, with the normal proviso that a supervisor (*komiser*) would be attached to the expedition. Back at Long Island University, Iris raised $50,000 from various charitable trusts and friends of the family to fund the first year's campaign.

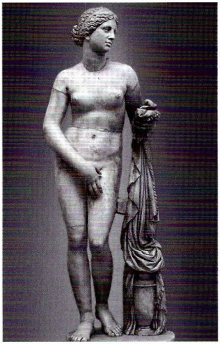
Cnidus was a challenging place to mount an expedition at the time. It had little water, no accommodation, and the road to the site was unpaved. "I felt that life for villagers in Yazıköy, the closest settlement to Cnidus, was very little changed from a hundred years earlier, when Newton had been there. There was no electricity, the villagers had no spectacles, and mostly wore no shoes."

She hired 100 men, paying $1 a day, and put together a team of young international archaeological assistants, about 25 in total. Everyone slept under canvas. Iris bought a Land Rover, in which she would bring drinking water to the site from Yazıköy, as well as fresh vegetables. Staple foods were tinned meat and bottled gherkins. Conditions were tough. Work began promptly with roll call at 7am. Lunch was from 12 noon to 3pm, then work resumed through the baking-hot afternoon. Organising and controlling the operation seemed to come naturally to Iris. The villagers of Yazıköy, unused to seeing a young woman in a position of authority, called her "Müdür Bey", or "Mr Director".

The first two summers, in 1967 and 1968, were largely spent surveying the huge site, excavating the streets west of the Upper Theatre, the Necropolis and the Stoa, which Iris published in the *American Journal of Archaeology* (*AJA*). However, it was in her third summer that she made the sensational discovery of the Round Temple.

It was found, according to Iris, on no less memorable a day than July 21, 1969, when Armstrong first walked on the moon. On that scorching day the excavations had been brought to a temporary halt by the news from Apollo 11. While her team of volunteers listened to the radio, Iris decided to climb the ridge to the north of the site. Looking down from this ridge, she saw unusual outlines in the land on a small plateau overlooking the city. The next day she shifted the excavation there and immediately found the base of a circular building. This was a spectacular discovery. No such round structure had appeared on previous surveys of Cnidus made by the Society of Dilettanti, by the French archaeologist Charles Texier or by Newton.

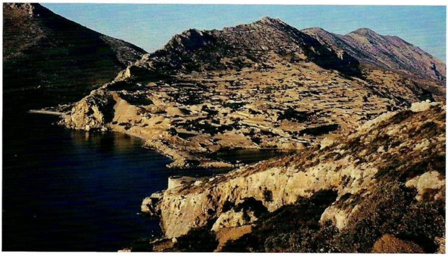
Iris Love began to build an apparently convincing case to support her belief that this was the temple that had housed the most famous statue in the ancient world. A circular temple seemed to fit the description of the building in Pliny, who wrote that "the shrine in which she stands is entirely open so as to allow the image of the goddess to be viewed from every side. The goddess is equally admirable from every angle". Other evidence seemed to support her case – the circular building was Doric and of almost identical size to the Temple of Venus in Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli. Among the temple ruins, but not in situ, was a large marble podium with the tantalising inscription PRAX. "This high, very fine, grayish-white limestone marble podium is set into bedrock," she writes in her excavation notes. But above all it was the building's position that seemed so suggestive of its purpose. To quote from Iris's description in the *AJA*, "The temple is located on the highest, most western terrace of the city, a suitable location for the goddess of the evening star and a spectacular site close to and overlooking both the commercial and trireme harbours, whose ships Aphrodite Euploia protected."


LUDOVISI COLLECTION / MARIE-LAN NGUYEN

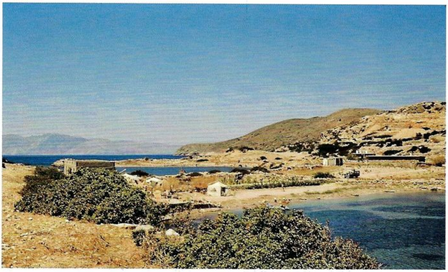
It was at this point, in the first months of 1970, that Iris Love reached the zenith of her reputation. Among the academic compliments was an invitation to give the Annual Lecture at the Smithsonian Institution, a great honour for a young archaeologist. Offers to fund further digs at Cnidus poured in. There was a bulging mailbag, with requests for interviews and college talks. The Smithsonian and CBS agreed to collaborate on a one-hour "Smithsonian Special" on *The Search for the Goddess of Love* (which was broadcast nationally in June the following year). For a young university lecturer in a notoriously jealous field, and still with no PhD, Iris was now dangerously famous. Academia did not take kindly to this kind of success, particularly in 1970 and particularly in a woman. But academia had no need to trip the young celebrity. Things were about to take a dramatic turn that would make her more famous still, but do great damage to her academic standing.

In May 1970, on a visit to London en route to Turkey, there began a dispute with the British Museum from which Iris Love's reputation never fully recovered. She had requested to see various unexhibited items from Cnidus in the BM's reserve collection. In this collection was a fourth-century BC female head, much damaged, that Newton had found in the Temple of Demeter, about half a mile from the Aphrodite temple. Newton (and virtually every scholar who had looked at the head since its discovery) had thought it to be of Persephone. Iris, gripped by a gut instinct, decided that this was nothing less than the head of Praxiteles' Aphrodite – a wildly ambitious attribution for which there was scant evidence.

Apparently worried that the BM was about to claim this "discovery" as its own, she went public with her attribution in November. *The New York Times* ran a story on the front page with the headline "Head of Aphrodite by Praxiteles Found". The first paragraph read: "A battered marble head that has been in the dust and gloom of the basement of the British Museum since 1859 has been identified as that of the Aphrodite of Cnidus".



MIKE CHESSER



MIKE CHESSER

TOP A view back to the hilltop acropolis from the headland. Blessed with two natural harbours, ancient Cnidus, a city a mile long, teemed with merchants and pilgrims. Today it is ruined and silent ABOVE The excavation camp in Love's day OPPOSITE A Roman copy of Praxiteles' legendary nude Aphrodite of Cnidus, restored in the 16th century

Perhaps not surprisingly, the BM saw this as a huge breach of academic etiquette. Dennis Haynes, the museum's keeper of Greek and Roman antiquities, made the reasonable point that the bust, far from being unknown, was heavily studied, and that no scholar had taken the view that it was the head of Aphrodite. Still, Iris Love clung obstinately to her convictions. In the meantime a cascade of negative publicity fell on the museum, which was accused of being unaware of treasure within its own collection. The museum, even then keen to lose its "stuffy" image, had only recently, to great general acclaim, unveiled its new Classical Galleries, redesigned in contemporary style (and unaltered to this day). But the uplift from this relaunch now seemed lost.

For the next few months Iris sparred publicly with the BM. Initially the publicity was hostile to the museum and favourable to Iris Love. But slowly, as 1971 progressed, the tone of the coverage changed. Attention of a less flattering kind began to fall on Iris herself. A devastating profile in *The New York Times Magazine* of May 1971 ("An Archeological Find Named Iris Love" by Elizabeth Stevens) describes Iris as impulsive, vain and a deliberate seeker of celebrity. It also points out a critical weakness in her academic qualifications – that she had no PhD. Iris responded with an irate letter to the magazine, calling the article "unworthy of *The New York Times*", but she never managed entirely to live down the criticisms. From this point the promising wunderkind of archaeology would increasingly be known as the profession's eccentric. Nevertheless, a positive article in *The New Yorker* in 1978 would inspire a generation of women to take up archaeology.

Scholars today are divided over the Round Temple. Recent work at the site by Professor Ramazan Özgan of the University of Selçuk has shown it to be a second-century BC *tholos* with an outer Corinthian colonnade and an inner walled room or *cella*. Moreover, it was dedicated not to Aphrodite, but to Athena. Nor is the fragmentary inscription PRAX on the podium likely to be that of the sculptor: it is more probably a private dedication by a homonymous Praxiteles. Dr Ian Jenkins, today's curator of Greek sculpture at the British Museum, who has himself excavated at Cnidus, feels it is impossible to take any definitive view on its attribution. "It could be a Temple of Aphrodite and is certainly of near-identical proportions to the Temple of Venus at Hadrian's Villa, but my feeling is that this temple was mostly likely a shrine to several gods, not to Venus Aphrodite alone." He feels that Iris Love's work at Cnidus was "responsible and generally professional", but became "over-personalised". He says "she became determined to discover the Goddess of Love and obsessed by the connection of her own name to that of Aphrodite".

Excavations continued for 11 years at Cnidus, in part owing to Iris's flair and energy for raising funds. Politically, things became more difficult following the Cyprus conflict in 1974, when Iris was once held at gunpoint in the office of the *kaymakam*, the provincial governor. In 1975 the annual permit to excavate was granted only in August. Permits were obtained only with some difficulty for the following years. The final campaign was in 1977.

Iris Love's involvement with archaeology did not end with her departure from Cnidus. She held teaching positions at Long Island University and at Smith and led many digs in China, for which she was honoured by the Chinese government. To this day she remains a spellbinding public speaker. But her attentions seem to have been increasingly claimed by the dachshunds and by a colourful social life in New York (she was mentioned no fewer than nine times in *The Warhol Diaries*). Her annual Christmas party became famous. She never finished the PhD.

"Do you resent being written out of the story at Cnidus?" I ask, as we finish lunch.

"Archaeology is a jealous profession," she replies with a shrug. "I spent the best summers of my life excavating at Cnidus, and I remain entirely convinced that the Round Temple I discovered in 1969 is the Temple of Venus Aphrodite and housed the most famous statue of the ancient world."

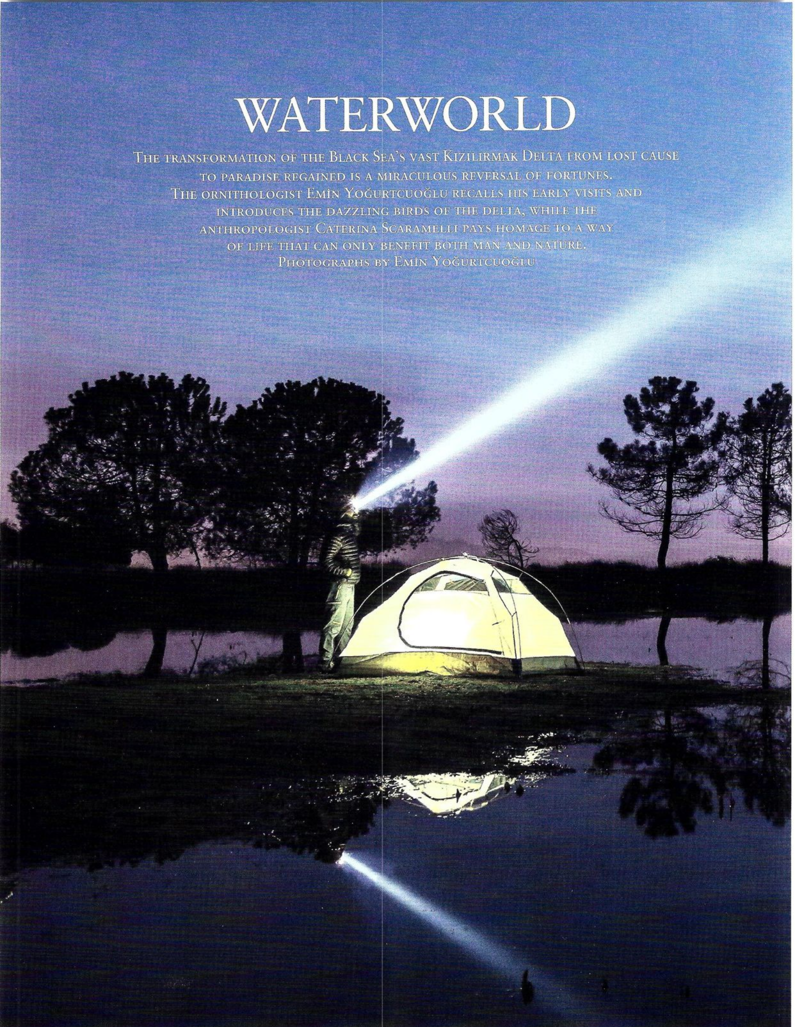
The rain is falling like a blanket as she steps back into a yellow cab on Fifth Avenue, and the only female archaeologist who was ever a household name disappears into the murky New York afternoon. ◆

RUPERT SCOTT *is author of 'Turkey Through Writers' Eyes' (Eland, £12.99). See* CORNUCOPIA 41 *for his article on Charles Newton's 1850s expedition to Cnidus*

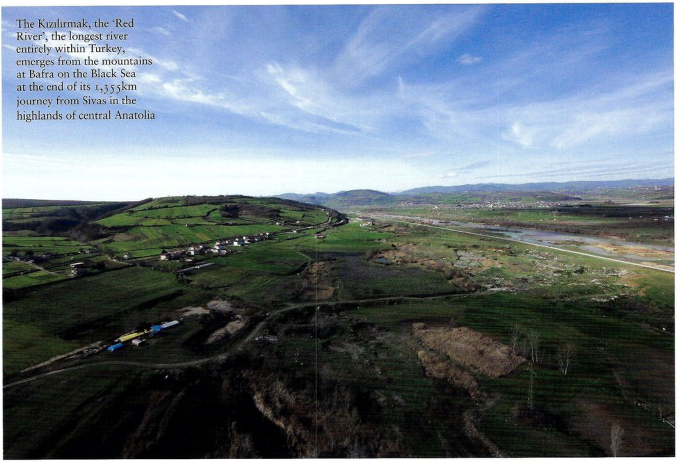
WATERWORLD

The transformation of the Black Sea's vast Kizilirmak Delta from lost cause to paradise regained is a miraculous reversal of fortunes. The ornithologist Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu recalls his early visits and introduces the dazzling birds of the delta, while the anthropologist Caterina Scaramelli pays homage to a way of life that can only benefit both man and nature.

Photographs by Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu



Despite the standing water, this area of the delta suffered in the early 2000s from an invasion of illegally built summer houses. Today, thanks above all to the determination of the mayor of Samsun, more than 350 have been demolished, leaving Nature to reclaim what was hers. As the impact of 'civilisation' slowly reduces, these pines, planted by house owners, remain, providing a welcome resting place for migratory birds



The Kızılırmak, the 'Red River', the longest river entirely within Turkey, emerges from the mountains at Bafra on the Black Sea at the end of its 1,355km journey from Sivas in the highlands of central Anatolia

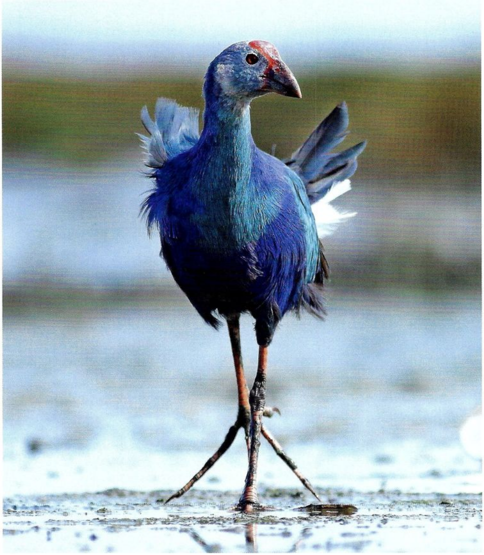
The river's alluvial deposits form the Kızılırmak Delta, the south Black Sea basin's most important wetland ecosystem. Its 21,700 hectares include pastures, lakes and flooded forests

The delta's forest is slowly regaining its former glory. Even at dusk, stars are visible in a sky free from polluting electric light

A wild horse gallops to catch up with its herd. These horses, descended from animals owned by former inhabitants of the delta, are free to roam where they choose

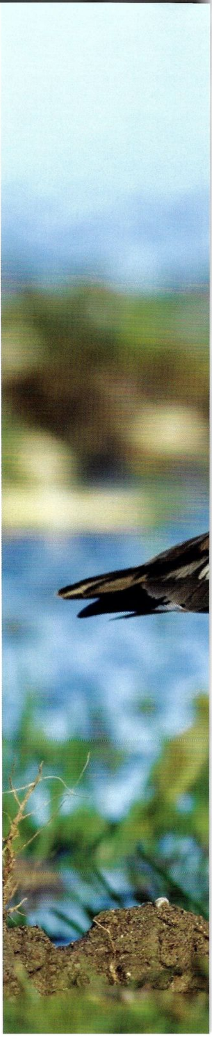
A VERY RARE VISITOR SEEN ONLY IN CORNUCOPIA

Opposite The grey-headed lapwing (*Vanellus cinereus*) is a familiar sight in the wet grasslands, rice fields and marsh edges of northeast China and Japan, but it has never been seen before in Europe or western Asia. This lone vagrant was discovered in the delta on March 11, 2018, when Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu was preparing this article. Like a gift from the skies, the extraordinary bird, found in an area where illegal summer houses once stood, stayed for just half a day and was seen by only a handful of birdwatchers



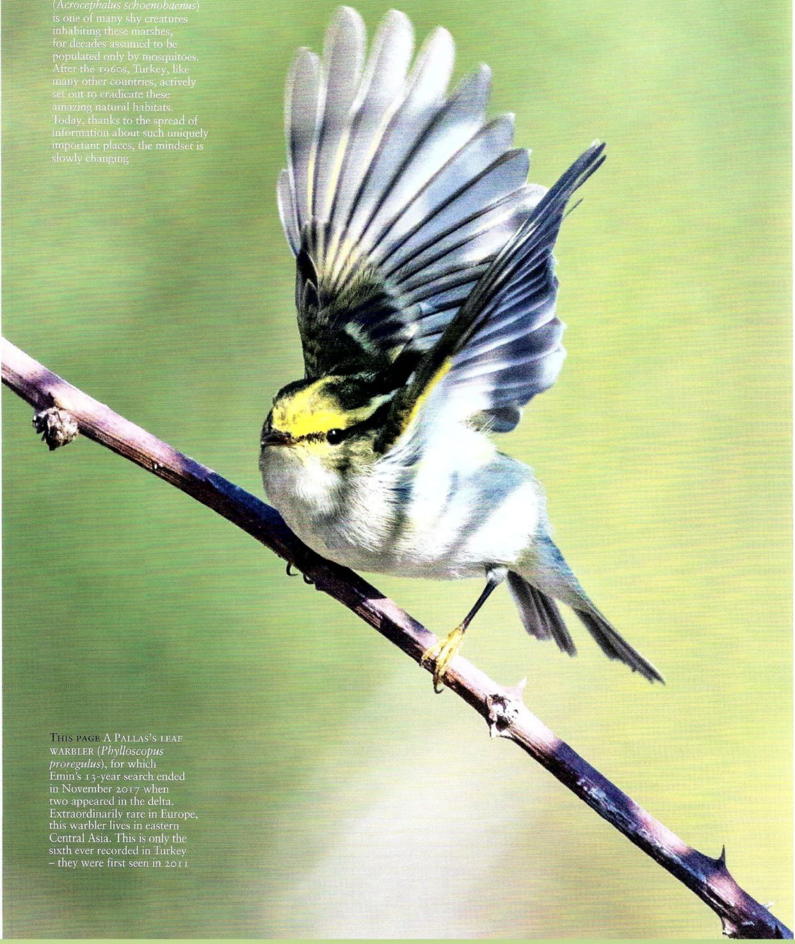
ÖZDEN SAĞLAM

Above Purple swamphens (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), once seen only in the Mediterranean, were first observed by birdwatchers in the delta in 1998, though sightings by locals date from 1993. Where these huge, odd-looking birds have come from remains a mystery, but now they are seen here in their thousands



Goldcrests (*Regulus regulus*) are associated with coniferous forest. In winter, however, several hundred visit the delta from the mountains in the south as they migrate across the Black Sea

Opposite The sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) is one of many shy creatures inhabiting these marshes, for decades assumed to be populated only by mosquitoes. After the 1960s, Turkey, like many other countries, actively set out to eradicate these amazing natural habitats. Today, thanks to the spread of information about such uniquely important places, the mindset is slowly changing



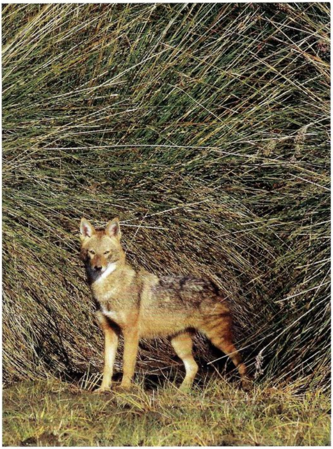
This page A Pallas's leaf warbler (*Phylloscopus proregulus*), for which Emin's 13-year search ended in November 2017 when two appeared in the delta. Extraordinarily rare in Europe, this warbler lives in eastern Central Asia. This is only the sixth ever recorded in Turkey – they were first seen in 2011

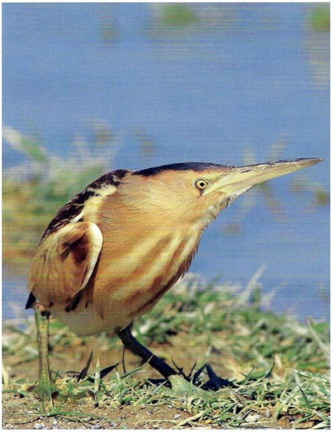
A black tern (*Chlidonias niger*) delicately helps itself to a fish at Çernek Lake, in the east of the delta. On a calm day, the glassy surface of the lake offers the chance to witness some breathtaking natural sights

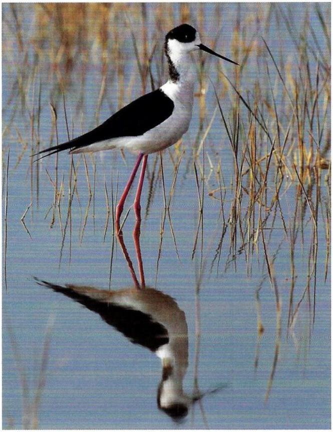
A BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica*) sings out loud and clear, leaving other migrating birds in no doubt that this patch of mud is taken

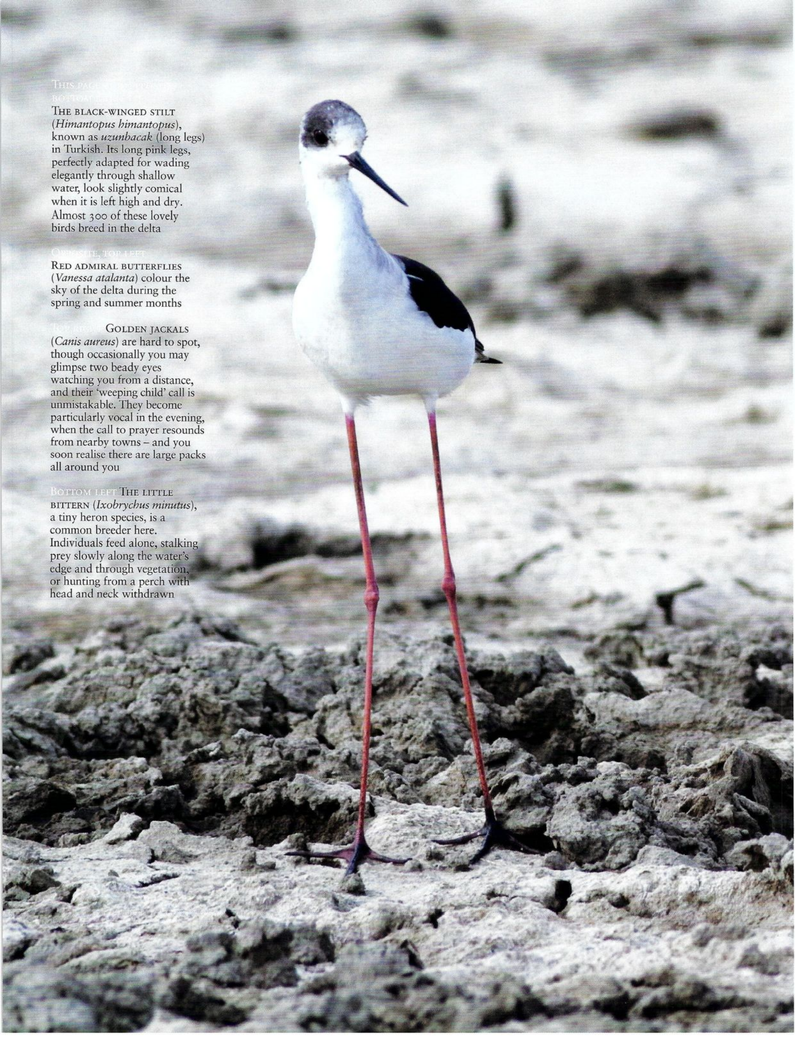
The wood warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) probably once bred here, but the birds left when the mature forests were chopped down in the 1960s, and are now seen in the delta only on their migration between Europe and Africa. They have been found breeding at a similar site in the Yıldız Mountains, close to Turkey's Bulgarian border

The citrine wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*), a lovely lemon-headed passerine, can be seen in the delta during its yearly migration









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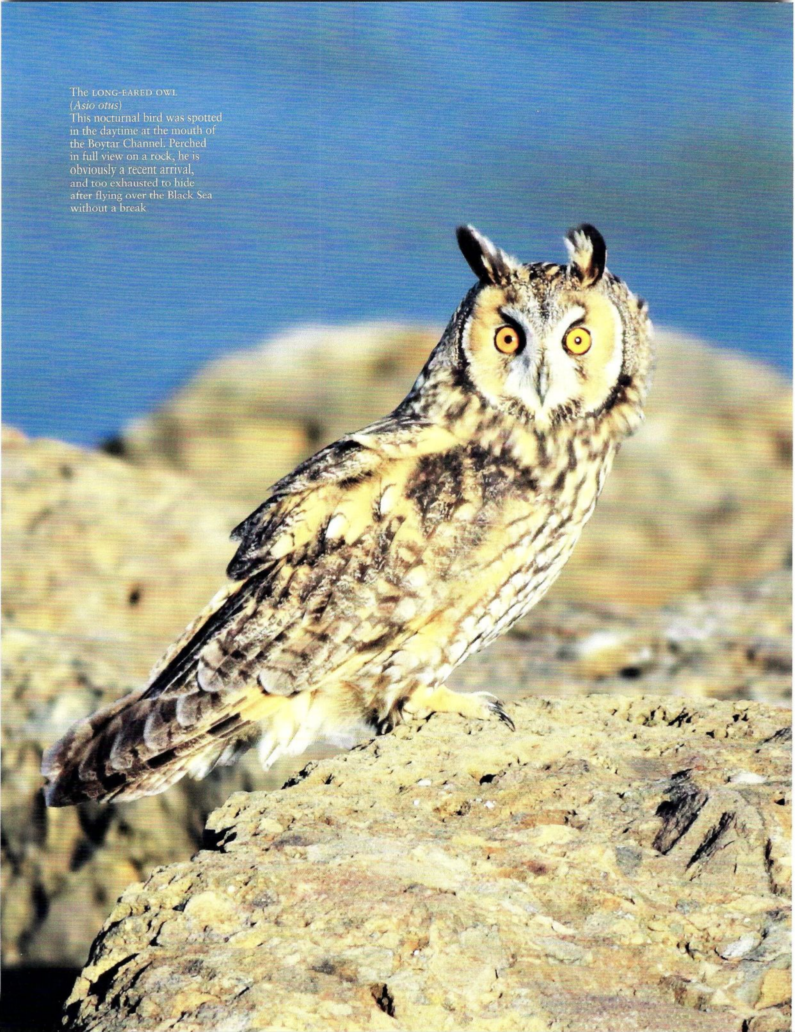
The black-winged stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), known as *uzunbacak* (long legs) in Turkish. Its long pink legs, perfectly adapted for wading elegantly through shallow water, look slightly comical when it is left high and dry. Almost 300 of these lovely birds breed in the delta

Opposite, top left
Red admiral butterflies (*Vanessa atalanta*) colour the sky of the delta during the spring and summer months

Top right **Golden jackals** (*Canis aureus*) are hard to spot, though occasionally you may glimpse two beady eyes watching you from a distance, and their 'weeping child' call is unmistakable. They become particularly vocal in the evening, when the call to prayer resounds from nearby towns – and you soon realise there are large packs all around you

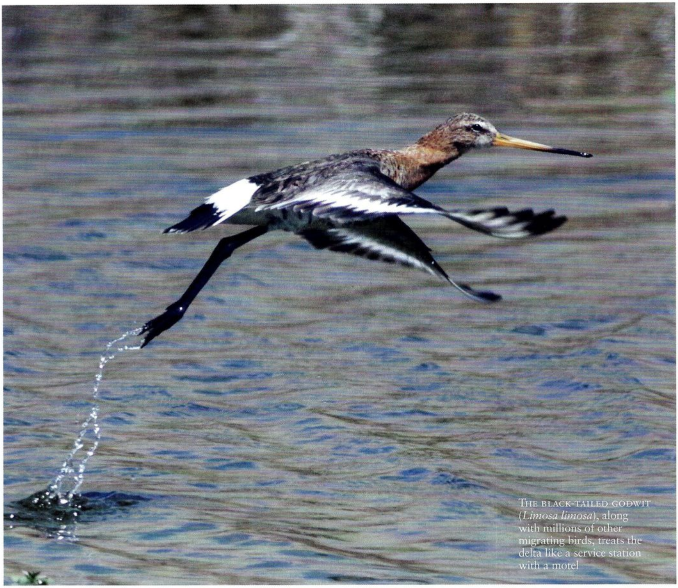
Bottom left **The little bittern** (*Ixobrychus minutus*), a tiny heron species, is a common breeder here. Individuals feed alone, stalking prey slowly along the water's edge and through vegetation, or hunting from a perch with head and neck withdrawn



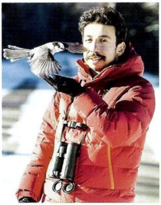
The LONG-EARED OWL
(*Asio otus*)
This nocturnal bird was spotted in the daytime at the mouth of the Boytar Channel. Perched in full view on a rock, he is obviously a recent arrival, and too exhausted to hide after flying over the Black Sea without a break

Cormorants, pelicans and other waterfowl collect in large numbers on the shore during winter storms

Spoonbills (*Platalea leucorodia*) resting in the delta's rice fields. Each year, migratory birds fly thousands of kilometres in search of the best weather and habitats for breeding, raising their young and feeding. These journeys are astonishing, not only in their scope but also because a bird's navigation skills would rival a GPS. But the voyage is becoming increasingly hazardous, thanks to climate change, habitat destruction and poaching



The black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*), along with millions of other migrating birds, treats the delta like a service station with a motel



Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu, photographed in Canada

TALES FROM THE BIRDMAN

By Emİn Yoğurtcuoğlu

Nizamettin and I stood gazing out to sea as we waited by the shore in the Atakum district of Samsun for the *dolmuş* that would take us to the Kızılırmak Delta. Suddenly, an eerie, deep-throated sound assailed our ears, electrifying us. I had never heard anything like it. Then I saw them. A pair of Arctic loons, or black-throated divers (*Gavia arctica*), were approaching from the north to take up winter residence. Right in front of us they glided, skimming the water's surface, so close they almost touched it.

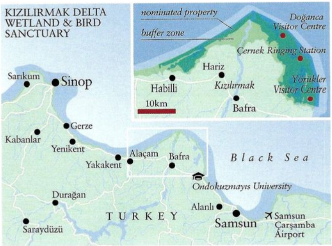
It was November 2005. I was 19 years old, in my seventh year of birdwatching, and this was my first sighting of the species. We hadn't even reached the delta, and already here was something new. I felt a flush of excitement and, though I tried to play it cool, my heart was pounding. Ever since I was a child I had dreamed of visiting the Kızılırmak Delta. Where *was* that *dolmuş*? By now I was almost beside myself with impatience.

What we wanted that day – all we wanted – was to see a few rare birds in the delta. It did not cross our minds that the preservation of one of the most important natural environments in Turkey would become for us a matter of grave and abiding concern. Our trip was to open our eyes in more ways than one.

Aboard the *dolmuş* at last, I was astonished by the intense green of the fertile landscape around me, under a grey, overcast sky. And there were birds – more and more of them, even before we reached the delta proper.

Our plan was to walk the full 20 kilometres across the eastern arm of the delta, but I began to fret that I had built it up too much in my mind – that the reality couldn't match my expectations. Nizamettin was from around those parts,

THE BEARDED REEDLING (*Panurus biarmicus*) is one of 35 species of passerine that breed in the remains of the delta forest. Its yellow bill and black drooping 'moustache' distinguish it as an adult male



SUSANNA HICKLING

ABOVE *The Kızılırmak flows into the Black Sea between the cities of Sinop and Samsun. The delta has been shaped by the prevailing west wind, which has created the main marshland area in its lee to the east. The delta falls under the aegis of Samsun, whose longstanding mayor, Yusuf Ziya Yılmaz, has been instrumental in its rescue. Highly sensitive, strictly protected areas of the KDWBS (Kızılırmak Delta Wetland and Bird Sanctuary), known as 'nominated property', are shown in dark green on the map*

though, and I comforted myself that he knew the terrain. He was a relatively recent convert to the hobby that had brought us together, but, as an art teacher, he had an eye, a visual acuity, which would be very useful when it came to recognising – and photographing – different avian species.

"It's going to be windy," he said as we stood to alight. And so it proved. Windy and deserted. When the *dolmuş* set us down outside a village named Yörükler the only sound was the crow of a rooster, the only sign of human habitation smoke rising from the chimneys of a few scattered houses.

A street led us through what was clearly a recent settlement, hemmed in by forest, the huge trees a riot of bare, twisted branches, magnified by their reflections in the standing water. Within no more than a few hundred metres we began to spot woodpeckers, songbirds, several common buzzards, and in no time we'd jotted down in our notebooks the names of 30 species. Who knew how many there would be by the end of the day?

We were just passing the last couple of houses, and I was gazing up at the sky, binoculars at the ready, when a jeering voice demanded: "What are you looking at?" Two men confronted us – one thickset, in a fisherman's beret; the other, his sidekick, in a filthy jacket, jeans and bright yellow wellingtons. Even those boots, I figured, would not be much use against the waters flooding the nearest garden, lapping against the house walls and threatening to float away a boat that was lying there.

"What are you looking at?" the big man again challenged us, even more aggressively.

"The birds," I said, trying to sound cooler than I felt.

"What birds? There aren't any."

"Oh, but there are," I insisted. "More than 300 species have been recorded here. There are…" I began to read from my notes.

"Baloney! There are 15 kinds at most. We should know – we live here. If there were more, we'd see them, wouldn't we? We've never even heard of half of those. It's people like you who are going to get us turned out of our homes."

"Just because you've never seen something," said Nizamettin reasonably, "it doesn't mean it doesn't exist."

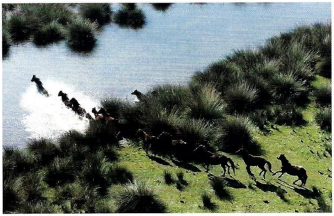
With that we turned and walked away, shaken by our first brush with the inhabitants of an illegal settlement that, over the next 13 years, would spread like a metastasised tumour toward the heart of the Galeriç Forest. Not for the beauties of nature had these summer villas appeared, but to make a killing when property prices rose in the area. The local wildlife, and the conservationists it attracted, posed a threat to these men's prospective profits, and I'm sure they'd have liked to wipe out every last bird if that was what it took to get rid of us.

On we marched, following the one track that leads between a lake and the sea to the Boytar Channel. It is an otherworldly landscape of sand dunes, brushwood thickets and strange-looking tufts of grass, some over two metres tall. On our way we saw thousands of birds in a variety of habitats – 82 species in a matter of a few hours. Since that day I have visited the delta probably a hundred times, but those first impressions have never left me, while my anxiety for the future of that watery dreamscape has only grown with the passing of time.

The Kızılırmak is the longest river to run its course entirely within Turkey, bringing alluviums from the interior of Anatolia to deposit them on the fertile Bafra Plain, west of Samsun, before it flows into the sea. The largest area of intact wetland on Turkey's Black Sea coast, the delta is a mix of open water, dunes, marsh vegetation including vast reed beds (reed-cutting is an important local industry), forest and farmland. The Galeriç is one of Turkey's very few seasonally-flooded forests, comprising mostly common alders and ash trees.

Almost all of the wetland is state owned and protected at the national level. Some 21,700 hectares are protected under the Ramsar Convention (an intergovernmental treaty on wetlands). In 1998 a site of 5,174 hectares, encompassing the Çernek Lake and its surroundings, was designated as a Wildlife Development Area. Of the 485 bird species recorded in Turkey, 356 have been seen

BELOW *Wild horses push their way through giant tufts of grass and plunge into one of the lakes. Horses form large family groups and forge strong individual bonds. As is usual with wild horses, the males are dominant and may fight ferociously during the mating season*



Above *A view across the marshes to the Çernek Ringing Station, opened in 2002 for the study of bird migration. Thousands of birds have been ringed, including the kingfisher on the following pages*

here, and the delta is a breeding ground for at least 157. Among 37 bird species listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as globally threatened, six breed and 10 winter on the property. The site is very important for the breeding, wintering and passage of waterbirds, with over 10,000 waders passing through in spring. Thirty-five species of passerine breed in the forests, and the while-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla)* has been known to breed here.

While I cannot travel back in time to see the Kızılırmak Delta as it was a hundred years ago, I have had the privilege of speaking with Fikret Can, an octogenarian from Bafra who has memories of how it was from the 1950s to the 1970s. He surprised me when he referred to the delta today as *çorak*, barren wasteland, until he described to me the impenetrable forest that it had once been. "Even the wild boars couldn't get into it," he said. In the 1950s the whole of the 50-kilometre coastal strip between Samsun and Bafra was covered with trees so enormous that three people holding hands could not encircle their girth. The road linking the two towns was like a tunnel of overarching branches. Cars making the journey would do so, day or night, with headlights on.

Fikret Can's family had a farm on a piece of deforested land, and to protect their fields of potatoes and maize from wild boars and bears they would mount guard every night. They could not have slept anyway, for the honking of thousands of geese flying to and from the nearby lake. Packs of wolves roamed free, and vultures hovered overhead. "When we lost one of our cows," said Fikret, "we would see where the vultures landed, and, sure enough, there would be our cow, its bones picked clean."

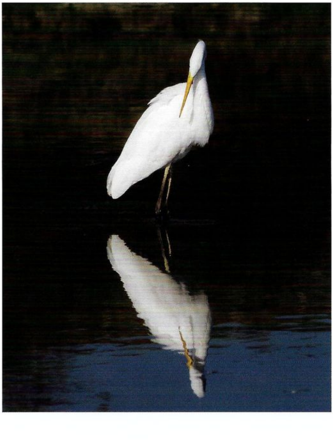
The destruction of the forest got under way in 1954, when the government began to encourage tree-felling to clear the land for agriculture. It was not until the 1960s, however, that the process of uprooting the mammoth trees was undertaken in earnest, when a German company arrived to look for oil. After that the water authority wrought even more damage in the interests of opening drainage channels.

And still today the threats to the delta continue. The Bafra Irrigation Project, if implemented, will reclaim all that is left of the wetland. Other major concerns include pollution from agricultural run-off and untreated sewage, reed-burning to improve grazing conditions, overfishing, illegal hunting, and sand-dredging.

On the positive side, one recent development has been the demolition of 350 holiday homes in the forest (including, no doubt, those owned by the two gentlemen who confronted us that first day). For this long-awaited move we are heartily grateful to Yusuf Ziya Yılmaz, mayor of Samsun, who has been supportive in so many ways. We are indebted also to Altay Cengizer, an ambassador and now Turkey's permanent representative at Unesco, for his efforts to draw international attention to the plight of the delta. Thanks to these men, the Kızılırmak Delta Wetland and Bird Sanctuary was placed on Unesco's "tentative list" of World Heritage Sites on April 13, 2016. In just one year the application was completed to have it placed on the permanent list (a process that usually takes four years), and we should know by June or July 2019 if it has been successful.

In the meantime, all we can do is to wait – and hope against hope that the wonders of the Kızılırmak Delta will be preserved for future generations.

Below Great white egret (*Ardea alba*): *10–15 pairs of this striking member of the heron family breed in the delta, but they mainly winter there. If the water is cloudy they disturb it with their feet to panic the fish, which obligingly come to the surface*



EGRETS and HERONS take advantage of old channels and streams to hunt for fish

COMMON KINGFISHER
(*Alcedo atthis*)
A remarkable spotting, this bird was ringed at the delta's ringing station on Çernek Lake (previous pages) on September 8, 2003. It was next captured three days later at Adana's Akyatan Lagoon ringing station on the Mediterranean, 560 kilometres away, which means it had flown an average 186 kilometres a day. The bird had weighed 39.3 grams in the Kızılırmak Delta and lost almost nearly a quarter of its weight in three days.

THREE DAYS THAT SAVED THE WORLD

By Caterina Scaramelli

MARY KUHN AND DAVID SINGERMAN

Above *The anthropologist Caterina Scaramelli makes friends with a water buffalo calf*

Opposite, top *Water buffalo graze freely in the delta, where their milk is a key element of the local economy. They serve many useful purposes, creating new habitats for wildlife, and acting as hop-on-hop-off transport for frogs*

Opposite, bottom *Aladdin and Cemile Yılmaz, Caterina's hosts in 2015, came to the delta 50 years ago and are passionate advocates of sensitive organic farming*

Like many others, when I first visited the Kızılırmak Delta wetland conservation area, I felt as if I had personally just discovered it. It was the summer of 2012. A few kilometres past an official sign marking the conservation boundary, the swamp forests opened onto meadows spangled with wild flowers. I saw herds of water buffalo grazing, seemingly unattended, and flocks of sheep. On the coast I observed the shifting sands change colour, close to a settlement that has since been demolished. On shallow lakes fishermen cast their nets as, from the shore, birds I could not name dived for food.

Speaking with ornithologists hard at work at a seasonal research station, I nodded sympathetically as they talked about the challenges and the promise of delta conservation. But it would be some time before I came fully to understand the deeper and more subtle history of environmental advocacy in the Kızılırmak, through the stories and perspectives of resident farmers, environmental scientists, nature photographers and other advocates for the delta's protection.

In 2014 I took part in two sessions at the "wetlands school" for university students hosted annually on the delta – the first (and only) immersive wetland education camp in the country. The project was funded by Turkey's Scientific and Technological Research Council (Tübitak) and the Ondokuz Mayıs University.

Over the course of two weeks, students from all over Turkey learnt about the Kızılırmak Delta's valuable – and threatened – ecological and cultural environments. Experts and educators from different fields, and often with very different visions, came together in a collective effort to "teach" the Kızılırmak Delta.

Their approach was holistic, encompassing ornithology and theatre, water quality and reed-weaving, local development and insect habitats. The activities were as hands-on as possible, conducted in the open air and in collaboration with farmers, local officials, residents and researchers.

One of the programme's many goals was to bridge the supposed divide between humans and environments. For many of us a key lesson was that successful environmental conservation emerges through collaborative efforts between different social groups, even in the face of competing interests and points of view.

As part of my rounded delta education, I watched ornithologists identify and monitor populations of birds. I saw photographers such as Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu take the most beautiful shots of birds and other animals in their environments. And I milked buffaloes.

A year after wetlands school, I was standing at a farmhouse bedroom window, watching the sun rise over a field bright with green shoots of corn. Beyond the field, out of sight, were more farmhouses, fields of peppers, then the coastal wetlands and dunes on the shores of the Black Sea. Looking down, I saw Aladdin Yılmaz, my host, trundling a wheelbarrow laden with silage. His wife, Cemile, was already in the barn, shovelling manure through a small opening onto the compost pile outside. Their daughter, Gülay, was pottering about in the kitchen. Later she would light the wood stove outside and bring a cauldron of buffalo milk to a gentle boil, before she and Cemile turned the milk into creamy yoghurt, delicate cheese and silky butter.

I tugged on a pair of woollen slacks and a shirt, paused at the doorstep to thrust my feet into muddy boots, and ran out to help. Aladdin and I mixed hay, silage and animal feed and forked the lot into sacks, which Cemile lugged into the barn on her back. When I followed her in, the heads of 15 wary water buffalo swung in my direction. On another day, Cemile would try to teach me to milk them. If I wore items of her clothing and her headscarf, the animals would smell her on me and let me get close to their dark, warm, furry bodies. In the garage, next to a brand-new tractor and a car, was an electric milk pump, but it was dusty and unused. The buffaloes, Cemile told me, hadn't got used to it. So she had continued milking by hand, twice a day, every day. Other farmers, with larger farms, had more automated systems and hired labourers to help, but most, like Aladdin and Cemile, did all the relentless hard work themselves.

In the course of that summer, the buffaloes grew used to my smell too, and I grew used to handling the fork and shovel. Newborn buffaloes grew into curious and playful calves, and a couple of young bulls were sent to the butcher. Those we tended to in the barn were only a small part of the family herd. Others grazed freely miles away, in the delta's conservation wetlands, like those I had seen on my first visit. Aladdin checked on them daily in their pastures, riding a scooter on the gravel road. There, in the delta's vast expanses of shallow water and wet meadows, the buffaloes help to nourish the soil, to keep reeds and aquatic plants at bay, and, by grazing in the meadows and stomping in the mud, to create multispecies habitats for birds, fish, plants and amphibians.

Like many of their farmer neighbours, Aladdin and Cemile had been drawn to the delta half a century before, attracted by agricultural developments and land available in the lowlands. The new neighbourhood in which they settled was named Çorak (wasteland), yet none of the farmers sees the lower delta as an area devoid of life. Rather, the term reflects the ungovernable nature of mud and water that damped their efforts as they tried to cultivate in the marshes and swamp forests of their adopted home.

For thousands of years people had come to the lower delta to hunt, to fish, to harvest plants and to graze animals. The Pontic geographer Strabo described it as a "fertile country, wholly consisting of plains, which produces every kind of fruit. It also affords pasture for flocks of sheep, which are covered with skins, and produce a soft wool." But the delta then was a very different place, a far cry from the one I was working in alongside Aladdin and Cemile. Today's landscape was created over the centuries by sediment carried by the Kızılırmak – at a rate of about ten metres a year – until construction of the large dams upstream blocked the flows.

Aladdin himself had worked on the construction of the dams. Like many other men from the delta's rural villages and towns, he had toiled on building sites in other parts of Turkey and abroad. Cemile had worked in the fields, their own and others', while raising their children. Over the years they had acquired a larger field and built a new farmhouse near the main road. As their children had grown, married and moved out, the ageing couple had made plans for retirement.

A few years before I met them, Aladdin had enrolled in a three-day hospitality course organised as part of a regional tourism initiative. The couple had seen carloads of birders arrive at dawn for a day of observations. Like other farmers, they greeted weekenders cycling through the delta's coastal road, observed cars driving to the visitors' centre, and talked to groups of students who came to study the special environment. They noticed that the delta had become more than a promising site of agricultural development: it was an increasingly popular destination for ecotourism and research.

If delta residents opened their houses as home stays, Aladdin and Cemile reasoned, researchers and amateur birders could more easily access habitats at daybreak and sunset. And since they, the farmers, knew the delta like the backs of their hands, they could help the visitors learn to observe this landscape of meadows, marshes, forests, dunes, canals and farms.

In our conversations Aladdin referred to the delta's conservation as a *kuş cenneti*, a bird paradise. This is how residents in Bafra and Samsun, and nature lovers all over Turkey, describe the lower delta. There are those, however, who say the term is limiting. Researchers and conservation officials are teaching visitors to think about the delta as more than an avian heaven. After all, it is a thriving ecosystem with multiple habitats and

MURAT SARAÇ

CATERINA SCARAMELLI

CATERINA SCARAMELLI

Above Mute swans (*Cygnus olor*) *Once common breeders in the delta, these birds disappeared after large drains were introduced, but they have made a remarkable comeback after illegal hunting was brought under control, and started to breed again. This pair was seen over vast marshes of the delta during a recent survey*

countless species of plants and animals – and only through complex ecological relations in a biodiverse environment are birds' lives made possible.

The expression "bird paradise" was used throughout the 20th century to designate bird sanctuaries worldwide. In the early 1900s it largely reflected a spiritual notion of environmental conservation as enabling a return to a world that no longer existed – a lost Eden. The term probably came into use in Turkey through the work of the German zoologists Curt and Leonore Kosswig on Lake Manyas, close to the Sea of Marmara. Designated a "bird paradise" in 1938, the lake in 1959 became one of the first National Parks in Turkey.

Efforts to conserve the lower Kızılırmak Delta have long been under way, with a cumulative effect resulting in today's success. The first plotting for the creation of a nature park in the delta began in the 1970s and 1980s – a period that coincided with new plans for irrigation and drainage in the lower delta and the construction of dams upstream on the river. Environmental advocates today recall the sometimes antagonistic responses they had from farmers worried they would lose access to agricultural and pasture land, and from developers eyeing up the coast for prime building land.

But by no means all farmers are hostile to conservation. Aladdin and Cemile well understood that use of the agricultural chemicals that fuel the delta's economy were contributing to the sickness of the soil, plants and animals, and their own crops, their bread and butter, *ekmek parası*. Many, given the means of support for delta-wide transition, would shift to sustainable organic production.

As for the developers, one particular settlement at the edge of the swamp forest and just within the conservation boundary stood as a visible, tangible symbol of divergent interests and visions for the delta's future. Today, there is vegetation growing on the rubble of the houses.

A node in the international migration of hundreds of thousands of birds, the delta is situated within networks of environmental research and protection. In 1994, Turkey formally joined the Ramsar Convention for the Protection of Wetlands, a treaty that since 1971 has been devoted to their conservation and sustainable use. It added four sites to a list of wetlands of "international importance" protected by the treaty: Lake Seyfe, the Sultan Marshes, the Göksu Delta and Lake Burdur. The Kızılırmak Delta became a *SİT Alanı*, a status that protects natural or cultural areas, and a comprehensive conservation and land-use plan was developed. In 1998 the coastal areas of the delta became Turkey's eighth Ramsar site, together with the Akyatan Lagoon near Adana, Lake Uluabat, west of Bursa, and the Gediz Delta in the Gulf of Izmir. Today, Turkey lists 14 sites protected by the Ramsar Convention, and numerous other wetland areas with national protection status.

The delta's conservation history testifies to a lesser-known history of Turkey's involvement in the international efforts of wetland and environmental conservation. In early February 1972 a delegation from the National Parks Department travelled to the Iranian town of Ramsar, on the Caspian Sea, to attend a conference on the conservation of wetlands. They joined representatives from 17 other countries, the intergovernmental agencies FAO and Unesco, and several NGOs devoted to environmental and waterbird conservation. Over the course of three days, delegates debated current approaches to wetland management and conservation, and discussed ways to balance technological development with environmental conservation.

At the conference, Turkey's delegate described the country as a "key point" for migratory birds in the Palaearctic Region,

MUSTAFA GÜLER

Left *The lakes in spring turn into seas of white water lily* (Nymphaea alba L) *and water buttercup* (Ranunculus aquatilis)

Opposite Black-winged godwits *and* dunlins *are in their element on the delta. Imagine you have trudged hundreds of miles along a long-familiar route. You're thirsty, hungry, footsore. Now imagine the hotel in the middle of nowhere – your usual resting place – has disappeared. The next is a long way off and you're out of food and water. This is what's happening to birds. Cities, farms and industry swallow up rest areas critical for frequent flyers – one of the many reasons why we should protect them*

and estimated the presence of about one million hectares. The drainage of wetland lakes is not a solution to the loss of agricultural land to erosion, he declared. He expressed hopes for more thorough hunting legislation, for the establishment of breeding reserves for waterbirds, and for raising public awareness. During the final session, Turkey's delegate declared that the conference would "stand as a landmark in the history of conservation", and promised the country would soon join other governments in signing the Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands.

The word "wetland" was then becoming a widespread and popular term for areas of shallow water such as coastal marshes, swamps, peat bogs and mangrove swamps. These places of water saturation and seasonal fluctuation between wet and dry were rapidly being drained and transformed into agricultural, industrial and urban land. Despite a long history of deeming marshes and swamps "wastelands", however, countless human civilisations had risen on those saturated lands. The 20th century witnessed both the rapid destruction of such areas and a renewed appreciation for their importance. In a 1965 publication entitled *Liquid Assets*, the International Union for the Conservation of Birds explained the unforeseen dangers of wetland drainage projects: erosion and flooding, loss of humus, dust storms, reduced fertility of the soil, and loss of habitat for many species of plants and animals. Globally, wetlands were disappearing faster than any other ecological systems. Turkish state officials and scientists, as well as members of civil society, were part of an international conversation about possible solutions to the worldwide loss of wetland habitats.

Decades later, through the enlisting of the Kızılırmak Delta as a UNESCO Heritage site, local environmental advocates continue to contribute to an international conversation about the very meaning of environmental conservation.

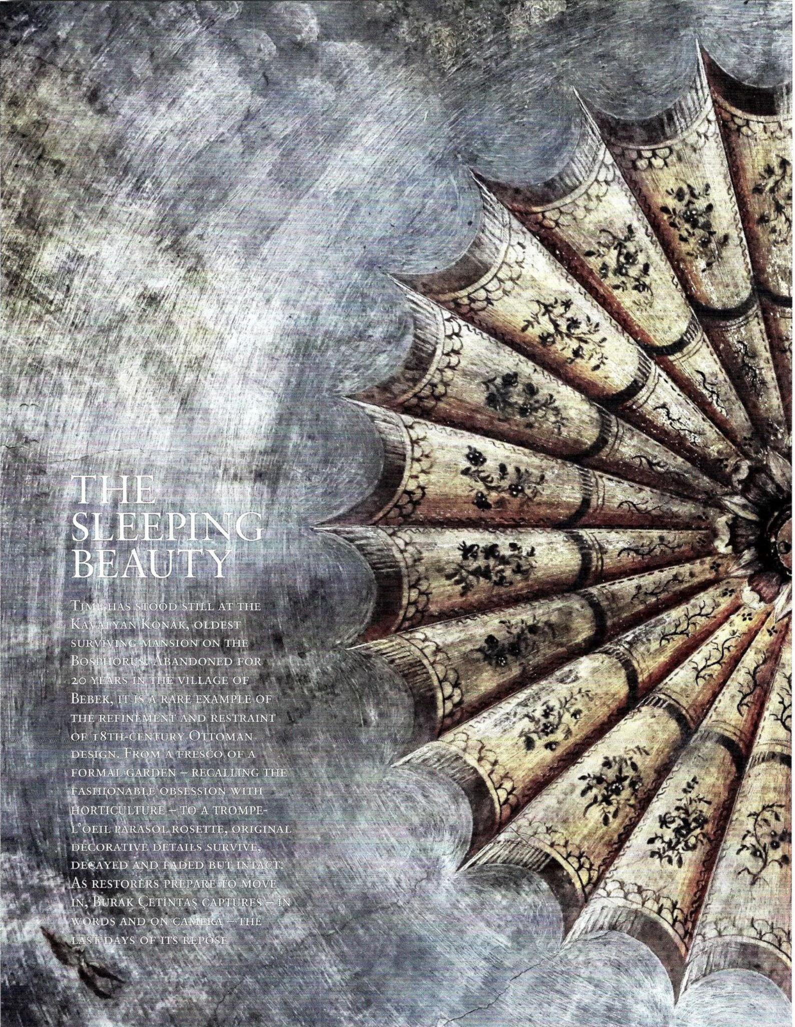
One day in the spring of 2015, standing at the very edge of the Kızılırmak, where the river flows into the sea, I realised that the delta has no real boundary. This discovery was not mine, of course: 60 years before (1955), from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, the American marine biologist Rachel Carson, in her book *The Edge of the Sea*, described an "enchanted place on the threshold of the sea". In this liminal area, land and water alternate, and teeming life forms are in constant transformation as they adapt to changing environments.

Watching the intermingling of river and sea, and gazing at the delta landscapes behind, I wondered what the 21st century was adding to this older vision. Carson made the Atlantic shore into a universal site for pondering the force of life. What will the story of the Kızılırmak Delta – with its animals, plants, waters, soils, microbes, and people – tell of our world? It is a story that, through their work and care for the delta, many are already writing. ◆

EMİN YOĞURTCUOĞLU, *who took the photographs in this article, is a wildlife specialist holding the record for the most birds observed in Turkey; instagram.com/birddetective/*

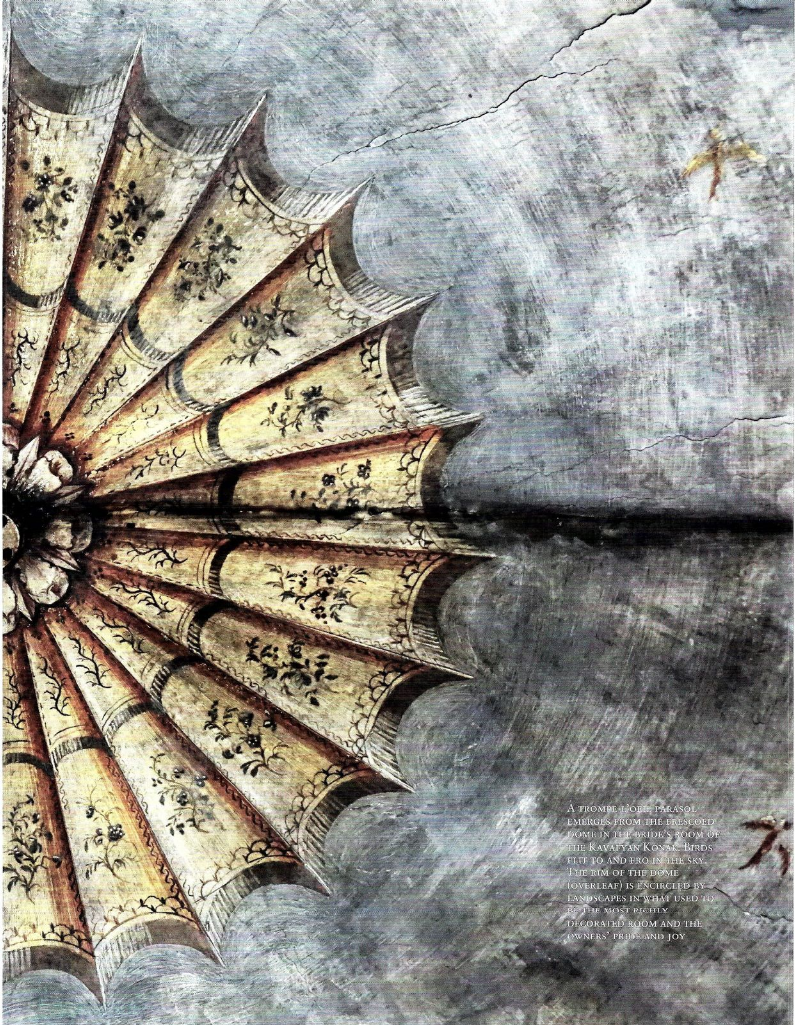
CATERINA SCARAMELLI *is an anthropologist and a Fellow in the Agrarian Studies Program at Yale University; caterina.scaramelli@gmail.com*

THY offers seven flights a day from Istanbul to Samsun Airport – a 1.5-hr drive from the delta. The drive from Ankara takes 6 hrs and from Istanbul 8. For more information on the delta, see cornucopia.net/kizilirmakdelta, or email Mustafa Güler, the KDWBS site manager, mguler55@gmail.com

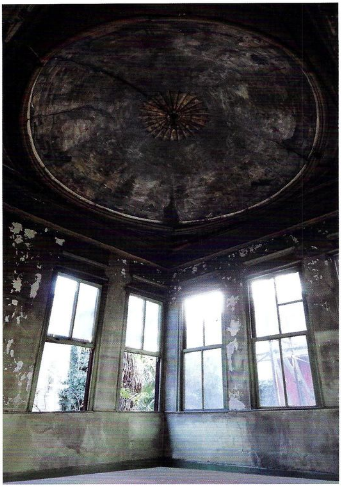


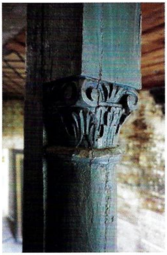
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

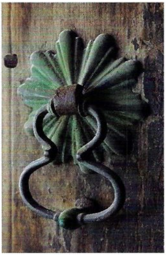
Time has stood still at the Kavafyan Konak, oldest surviving mansion on the Bosphorus. Abandoned for 20 years in the village of Bebek, it is a rare example of the refinement and restraint of 18th-century Ottoman design. From a fresco of a formal garden – recalling the fashionable obsession with horticulture – to a trompe-l'oeil parasol rosette, original decorative details survive, decayed and faded but intact. As restorers prepare to move in, Burak Çetintaş captures – in words and on camera – the last days of its repose

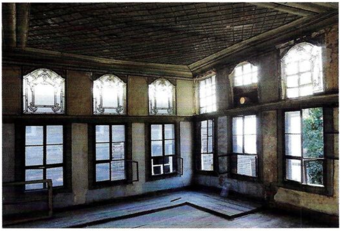


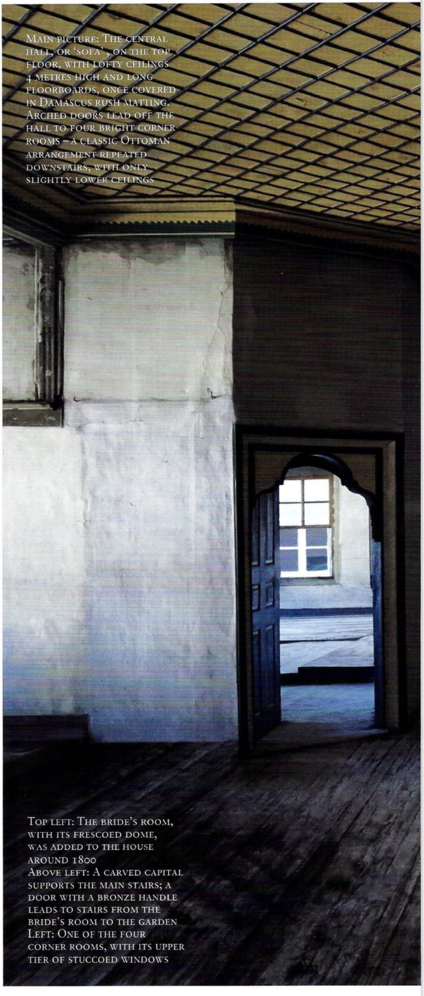
A trompe-l'oeil parasol emerges from the frescoed dome in the bride's room of the Kavafyan Konak. Birds flit to and fro in the sky. The rim of the dome (overleaf) is encircled by landscapes in what used to be the most richly decorated room and the owners' pride and joy





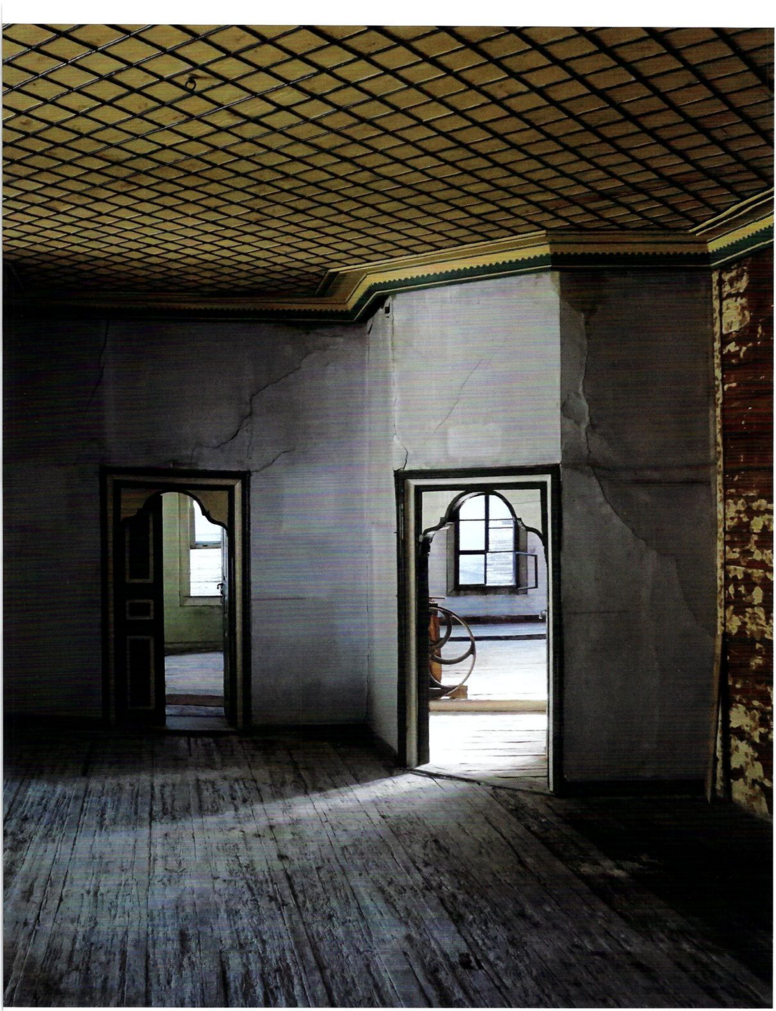


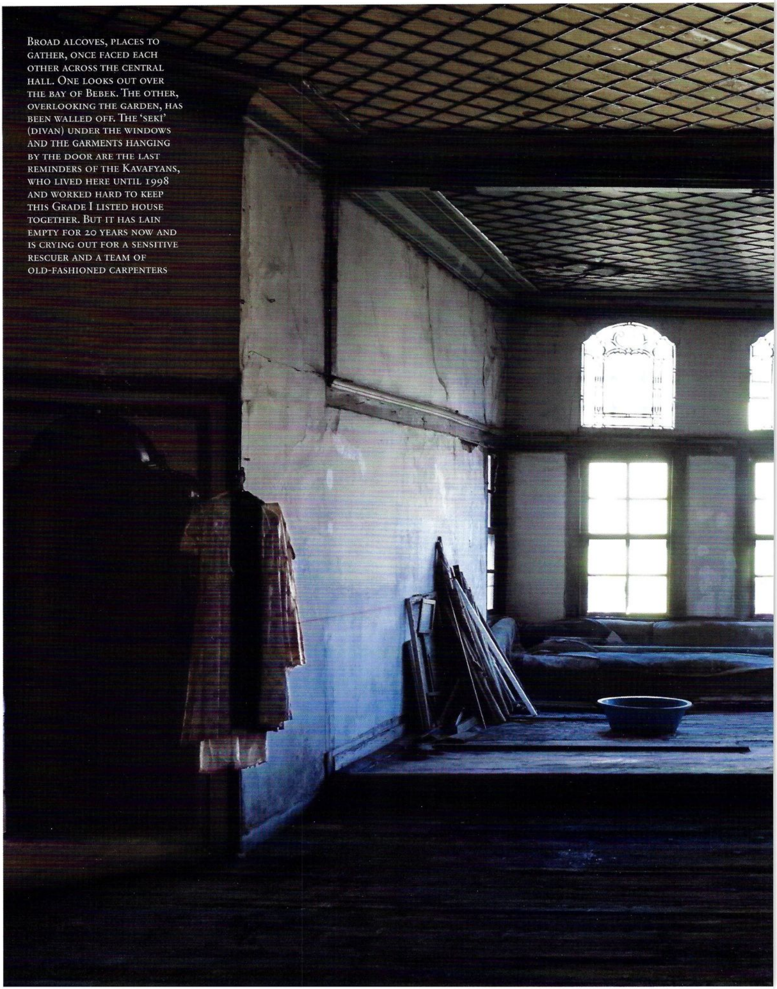




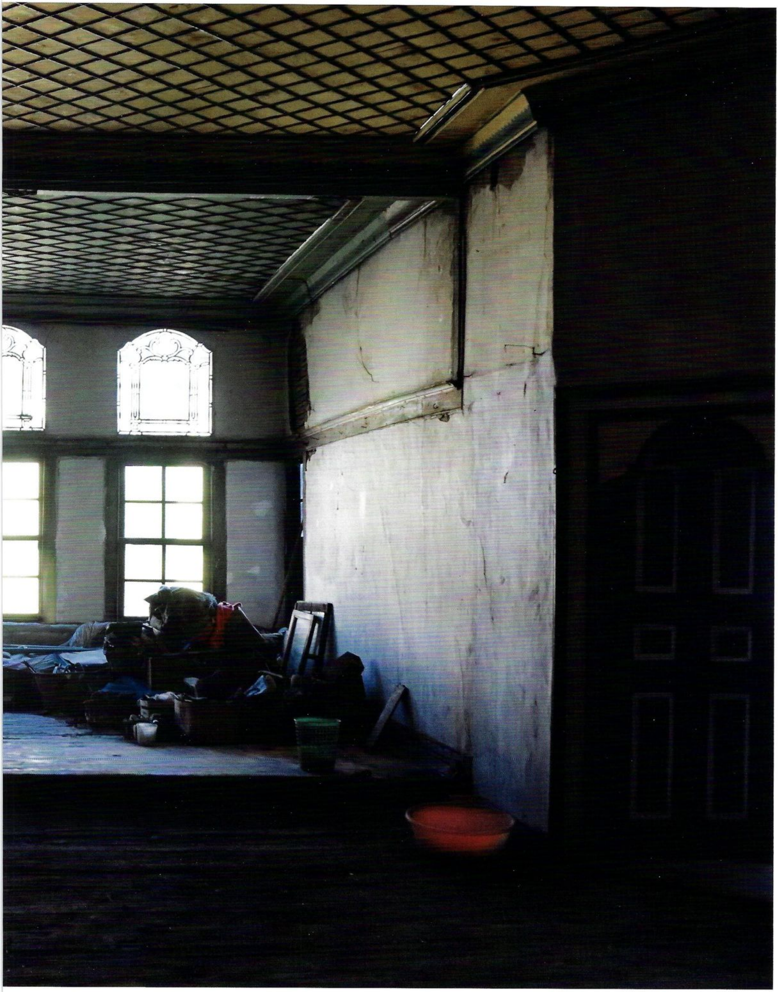
Main picture: The central hall, or 'sofa', on the top floor, with lofty ceilings 4 metres high and long floorboards, once covered in Damascus rush matting. Arched doors lead off the hall to four bright corner rooms – a classic Ottoman arrangement repeated downstairs, with only slightly lower ceilings

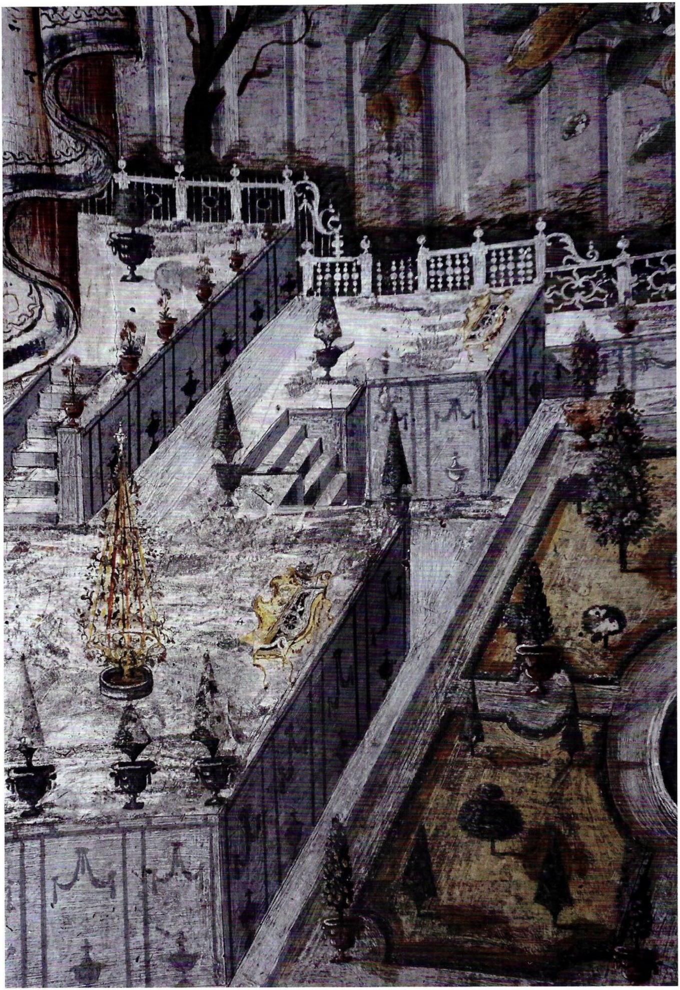
Top left: The bride's room, with its frescoed dome, was added to the house around 1800
Above left: A carved capital supports the main stairs; a door with a bronze handle leads to stairs from the bride's room to the garden
Left: One of the four corner rooms, with its upper tier of stuccoed windows

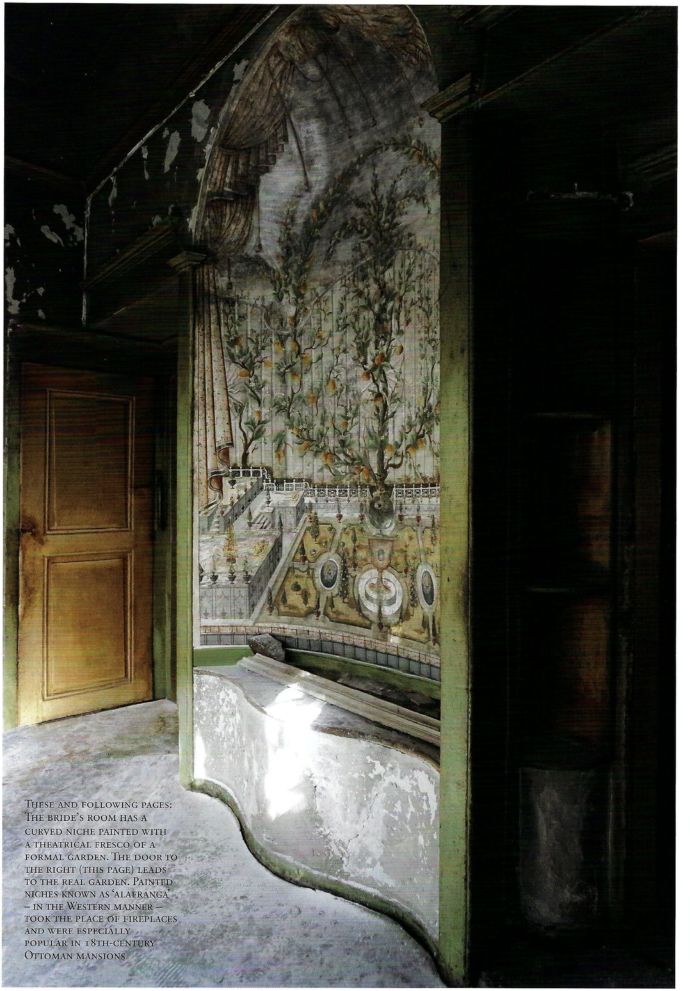




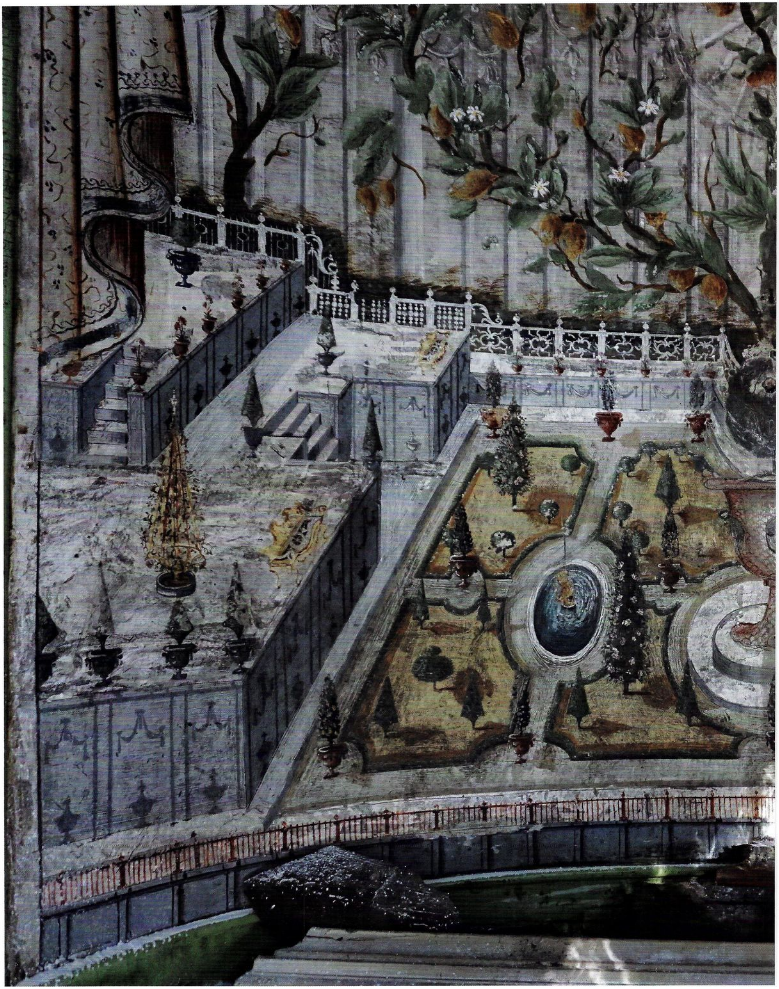
Broad alcoves, places to gather, once faced each other across the central hall. One looks out over the bay of Bebek. The other, overlooking the garden, has been walled off. The 'seki' (divan) under the windows and the garments hanging by the door are the last reminders of the Kavafyans, who lived here until 1998 and worked hard to keep this Grade I listed house together. But it has lain empty for 20 years now and is crying out for a sensitive rescuer and a team of old-fashioned carpenters

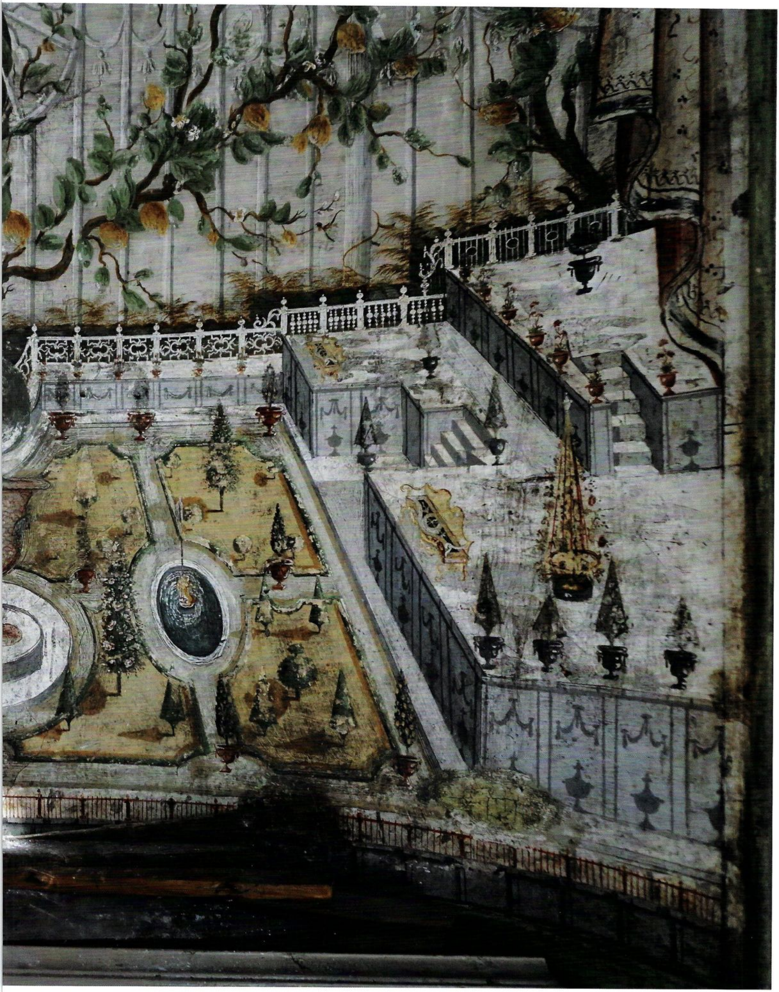


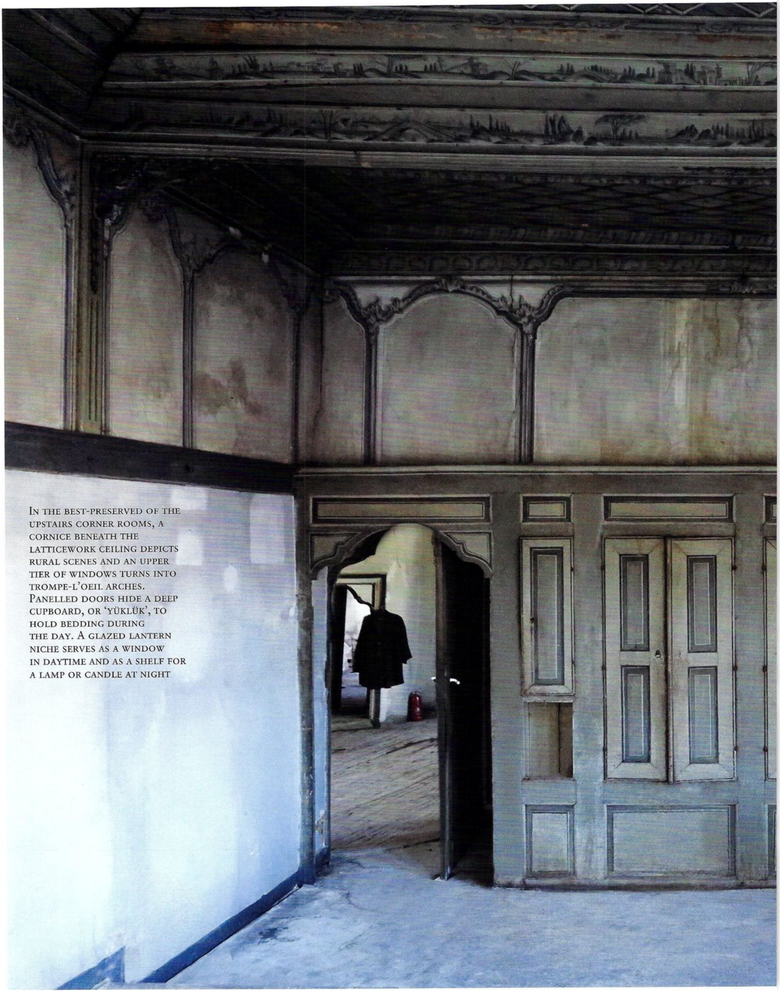




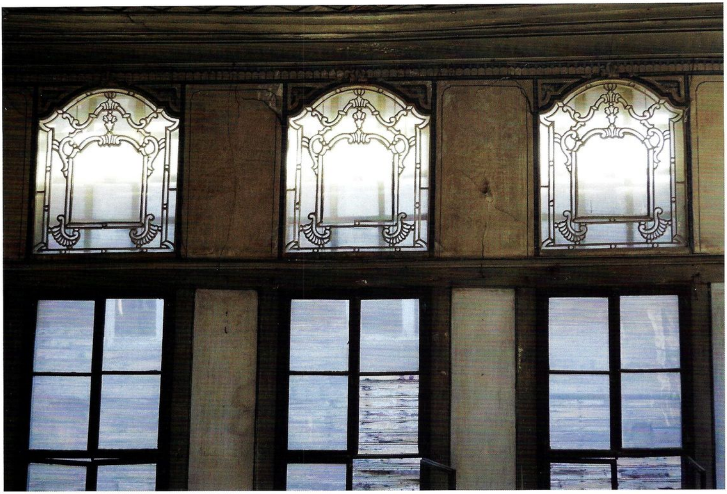
These and following pages: The bride's room has a curved niche painted with a theatrical fresco of a formal garden. The door to the right (this page) leads to the real garden. Painted niches known as 'alafranga' – in the Western manner – took the place of fireplaces and were especially popular in 18th-century Ottoman mansions

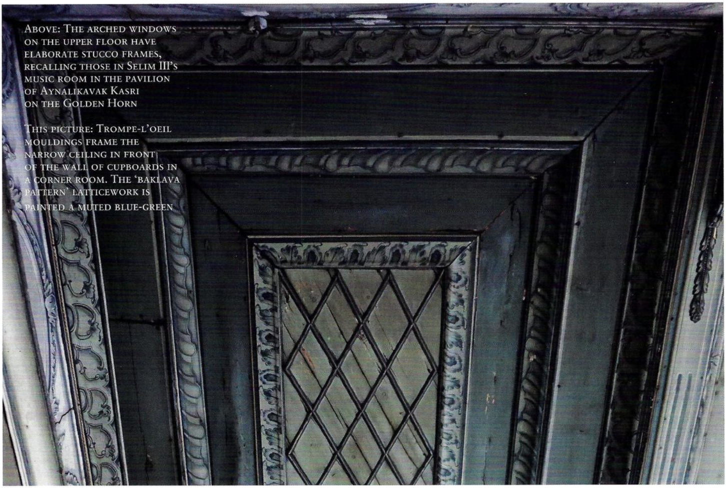






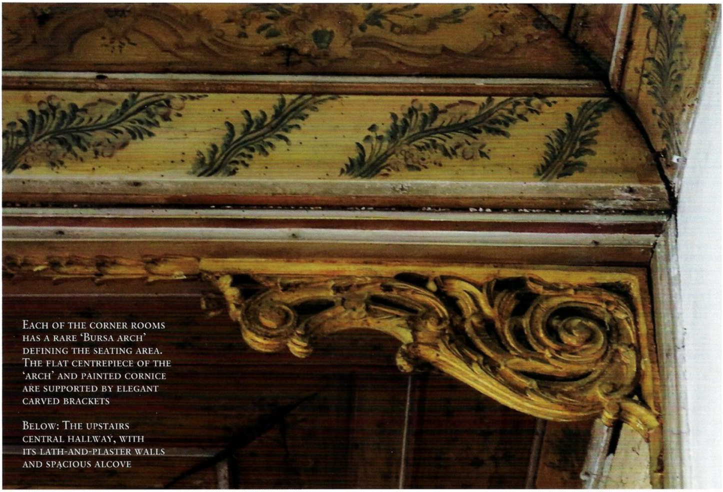
In the best-preserved of the upstairs corner rooms, a cornice beneath the latticework ceiling depicts rural scenes and an upper tier of windows turns into trompe-l'oeil arches. Panelled doors hide a deep cupboard, or 'yüklük', to hold bedding during the day. A glazed lantern niche serves as a window in daytime and as a shelf for a lamp or candle at night





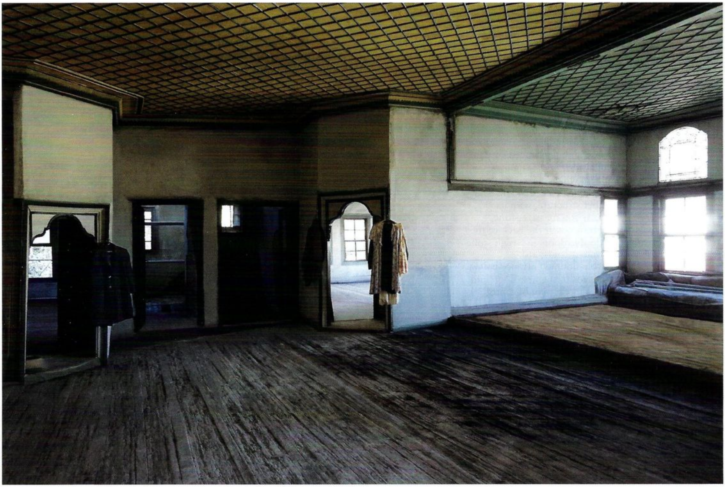
Above: The arched windows on the upper floor have elaborate stucco frames, recalling those in Selim III's music room in the pavilion of Aynalikavak Kasri on the Golden Horn

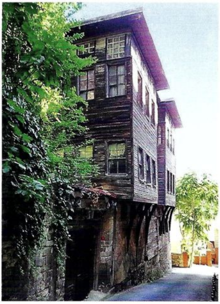
This picture: Trompe-l'oeil mouldings frame the narrow ceiling in front of the wall of cupboards in a corner room. The 'baklava pattern' latticework is painted a muted blue-green



Each of the corner rooms has a rare ‘Bursa arch’ defining the seating area. The flat centrepiece of the ‘arch’ and painted cornice are supported by elegant carved brackets

Below: The upstairs central hallway, with its lath-and-plaster walls and spacious alcove





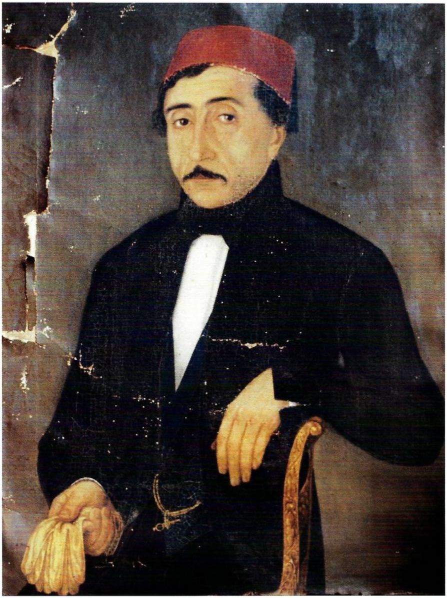
The colonisation of the Bosphorus shoreline by the Ottoman elite began in the early 1700s, at the urging of Nevşelirli Damat İbrahim Pasha, Ahmed III's enlightened grand vizier. The centuries-old small fishing village of Bebek, on the European shore, suddenly found itself the height of fashion, as the great and the good built wooden mansions on the hillsides and summer residences along the waterfront.

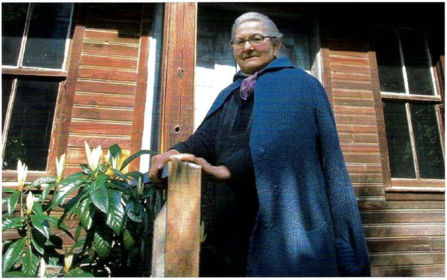
All but one of these delicate, birdcage-like houses have disappeared. The sole survivor is the Kavafyan Konak, built, presumably, by 1751 (the date chiselled into a fountain in the garden). The name of the first owner is lost to history. However, in the early 1800s, it came into the possession of an Armenian shipping magnate named Kavafyan, remaining in the same family until the death of his last descendants in 1998.

Climbing the hill from the waterside, you will find the house and its terraced garden hidden away on a side street (Yoğurtçu Zülfü Sokak), from which it faces out over the Bosphorus, its back to Bebek hill. The three-storey timber structure, with its austere façade, is set on massive stone footings. The entrance is at the back of the house through double doors in a high stone wall that open onto a courtyard.

From the marble-floored entrance hall, a timber staircase leads to the first floor, laid out to a classical Turkish plan of central reception hall, or *sofa*, looking down to the blue waters of the Bosphorus on one side and up to the wooded hillside on the other. Off this light and spacious hall are four corner rooms. For the architectural historian Doğan Kuban, it was such "clear geometry" and "luminous interior spaces" that made Turkish houses "closer to modern taste than anything created in Europe in the pre-modern period".

On the upper storey, the *sofa* floor plan is





repeated, with the addition of a domed chamber, "the bride's room" (*gelin odası*), which is embellished with gilded floral brushwork. A mural in an *alafranga* niche depicts a garden with fountains, balustrades, terraces, flower urns and orange trees at once fruiting and in bloom – fashionable French motifs scattered among traditional elements. In an Ottoman household no expense was spared in preparing the bride's room, to make a young girl feel happy in her new family.

Apart from this delicately beautiful 19th-century room, the house is more or less in its original 18th-century state. Raised platforms (*seki*) under the windows are waiting to be turned into inviting seating areas with drifts of cushions. An upper tier of windows is another characteristic element of Ottoman architecture, and, though some have been blocked in, those that remain still have their stucco frames, with baroque detailing and possibly a few handmade panes.

Ceilings are decorated with classical lozenge-patterned latticework. The panelled built-in cupboards (*yüklük*) in the wall facing the windows are also part of the original floor plan: the perfect storage area in which to keep beds during the day and to stow clothes and other possessions. Many of the panelled doors are painted a lovely blue-green sage. Sadly, the prettiest, painted with floral motifs on red-ochre, are missing. One imagines they were irresistible.

One of the upstairs corner rooms has a lantern window in the exterior wall, which must have let sunlight into the room by day and candlelight into the street at night. Brick and stone remains of the old kitchen and hamam are still found in the garden, but there is no apparent evidence of the stables and grooms' quarters that must have been located there.

In his *Lettres sur la Grèce, l'Hellespont et Constantinople* (1811), the French artist Antoine-Laurent Castellan writes of a visit to the admiral Hüseyin Pasha's residence at Kasımpaşa: "We entered a beautiful salon whose walls were covered with painted and gilded woodcarving." Above the panelling was "a stucco frieze" with "scenes of the Bosphorus with its palaces, kiosks, mosques and gardens".

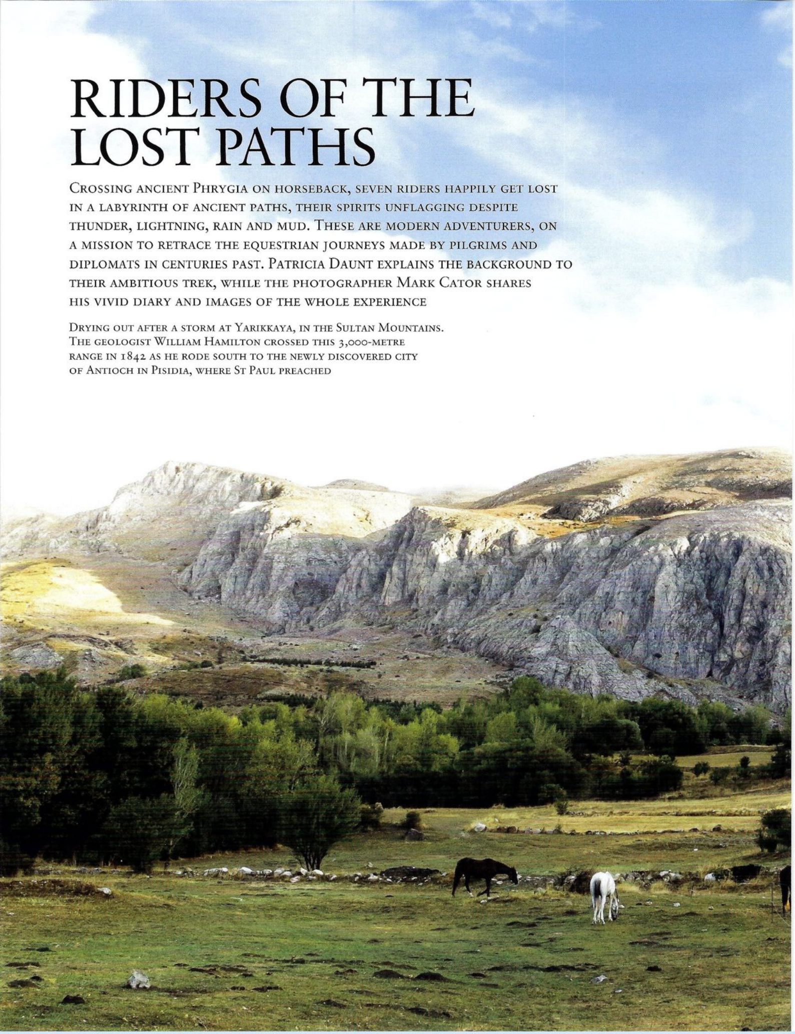
He could have been describing the Kavafyan Konak in its glory days. One of the last few surviving wooden houses in Istanbul and a fine example of 18th-century Ottoman vernacular architecture, it has been crying out for care and protection. ◆

BURAK ÇETİNTAŞ *is an Ottoman historian specialising in Istanbul's architectural heritage*

OPPOSITE, TOP ROW THE AUSTERE FAÇADE OF THE HUGE 18TH-CENTURY KAVAFYAN MANSION
CENTRE AND BOTTOM THE VIEW OF THE ASIAN SHORE FROM THE HOUSE IN 1900 AND TODAY
ABOVE THE SHIPOWNER MR KAVAFYAN, WHO BOUGHT THE HOUSE IN THE EARLY 1800S
LEFT BEATRİS KAVAFYAN, WHO DIED IN 1998, THE LAST OF THE FAMILY TO LIVE HERE

RIDERS OF THE LOST PATHS

Crossing ancient Phrygia on horseback, seven riders happily get lost in a labyrinth of ancient paths, their spirits unflagging despite thunder, lightning, rain and mud. These are modern adventurers, on a mission to retrace the equestrian journeys made by pilgrims and diplomats in centuries past. Patricia Daunt explains the background to their ambitious trek, while the photographer Mark Cator shares his vivid diary and images of the whole experience



Drying out after a storm at Yarikkaya, in the Sultan Mountains. The geologist William Hamilton crossed this 3,000-metre range in 1842 as he rode south to the newly discovered city of Antioch in Pisidia, where St Paul preached

'Cars and lorries superseded horses for journeys of any consequence – until a trio of Ottoman historians in

TRAVEL, HORSES AND WRITING HAVE LONG BEEN PATRICIA DAUNT'S PASSIONS. HERE SHE SETS THE SCENE FOR A GROUP OF FRIENDS WHO RODE IN THE TRACKS OF EARLIER RIDERS

With the advent of paved roads, the horse continued, well into the 21st century, to pull carts in town as well as country. But cars and lorries superseded horses for journeys of any consequence – until a trio of Ottoman historians in Britain conceived the ambition to follow in the hoofprints of earlier travellers journeying across Anatolia, in particular Evliya Çelebi, 17th-century Koranic scholar and Ottoman diplomat, as he set out from Istanbul on his final pilgrimage to Mecca in 1671. Caroline Finkel, Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean shared enthusiasm for riding, as well as familiarity with Çelebi's ten-volume travelogue, the *Seyahatname*. But in 2006 they lacked one essential: horses.

The project seemed likely to founder, despite sponsorship and general enthusiasm for the concept of promoting the Evliya Çelebi Way: a cultural trail for both walkers and riders would add substantially to the work pioneered by Kate Clow. In 2000 she had published *The Lycian Way*, a hiker's guide linking well-known with lesser-known Lycian cities along remnants of old paved roads and long-forgotten pathways. It was followed four years later, with equal success, by *The St Paul Trail*, a walking guide through the Taurus Mountains on stretches of the Via Sebaste, a road built by the Seleucids to connect their new city of Antioch in Pisidia with Perge and the coastal plain.

With failure imminent, Caroline Finkel belatedly adopted my recommendation to sound out Ercihan Diları, a talented horseman with whom I had ridden in Cappadocia, learning more about the area's geography and topography, the seasonal changes of its flowers, trees and birds, the customs and dress of villagers and the architecture of villages than was remotely possible on foot or by car.

The horses at Ercihan's top-notch riding centre in Avanos, on the banks of the Kızılırmak river, were suitably courageous native breeds. But hitherto he had offered little beyond "riding holidays around the beauties of Cappadocia". For all that, wanderlust was a close second to

Britain conceived the ambition to follow in the hoofprints of earlier travellers journeying across Anatolia'

horsemanship in Ercihan's make-up. He made light of the difficulties of reviving the journey of some past luminary in country foreign to him, along northwest Anatolian bridleways that were now at best rutted farm tracks peppered with classical ruins and early Christian associations.

Within a year of being persuaded by Caroline, Ercihan was ready. Over the winter he had prospected possible routes by motorbike, sounded out villagers' opinions of riding – and walking – parties wanting to camp or to lodge in their villages, acquired and modified a truck to support the riding party, laid in stores and recruited a team to service it and its mounts for however long it might take to follow the first thousand miles of the pious traveller's last "haj".

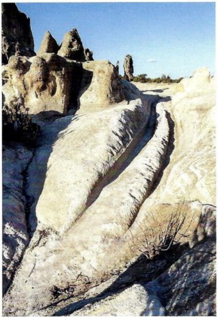
I was lucky enough in 2009 to join the three scholars and three others on the first lap of what was to become the Evliya Çelebi Way. We omitted the overbuilt coastline east of Istanbul and set out from Hersek, knowing that Evliya would have ridden from Üsküdar to ship his horses from Diliskelesi to Hersek, on the Sea of Marmara's southern shore. This crossing, in use for centuries, was sketched two centuries later by Lady Anne Blunt, indomitable breeder of Arabian horses, when she took that route on a camping trip in 1873, perilously crowding her horses aboard a small local craft.

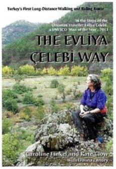
Evliya's roundabout route from Hersek southwards via Bursa and Afyonkarahisar to Kütahya was never without adventure, beauty or interest, whether we were lost among the vine-clad hills above Iznik or the neglected orchards behind Bursa or the noble beech of the Uludağ forests, where, for good or bad luck, we passed the corpses of wild boar suspended from branches.

By the time we had reached Gediz, Ercihan had arranged with the employees of the Uşak sugar factory an additional excitement for his first riding party on the Evliya Çelebi Way. He had blithely committed them to compete in a game of *cirit*, the wildly competitive game of the Ottoman *sipahi* cavalry, and to be guests at a village wedding or two.

As news of these long-distance rides slowly spread, those lucky enough to take part

Opposite The start of the journey: the climb from Yarikkaya leads up through a vast landscape of biblical hills and high plains
Below Journey's end: Peter Nahum photographed the party on the shore of Lake Emre on the final day of the ride. Fellow photographer Mark Cator is leading the way




Turkey's First Long-Distance Walking and Riding Route
In the Steps of the Ottoman Traveller Evliya Çelebi, a UNESCO 'Man of the Year', 2011
THE EVLİYA ÇELEBİ WAY
Caroline Finkel and Kate Clow with Donna Landry

Above Ancient cart tracks in sandstone in the Göynüş Valley, also known as the Phrygian Valley

Left The 17th-century Ottoman traveller Evlİya Çelebİ's diaries have inspired a new generation of serious riders. Co-author Caroline Finkel appears on the cover of a book of waymarked routes by three Cornucopia writers

Right A Roman aqueduct built to carry spring water to Antioch in Pisidia vanishes into the folds of the Sultan Mountains

Opposite top The great roaring lions of Aslankaya, the grandest of Phrygia's lion tombs, probably 6th century BC

Below The magnificent seven: Ercİhan Dİlari (in cowboy boots) flanked by the team that looked after the riders from start to finish

recruited friends and relations to join them; Ercihan needed little persuasion temporarily to leave aside the project of the Çelebi Way and instead to explore a section of the Via Sebaste, covered in Kate Clow's *St Paul Trail*. In early June 2013, with daredevil know-how, he led 14 horses and 12 riders through the snows on Davras Dağı, the cedar and oak forest above Lake Eğirdir, to follow the near-impenetrable limestone gorges of the Eurymedon (Köprülü) river from source to Selge on the Mediterranean, an astonishing feat of endurance for its organiser, horses and riders.

Undaunted, in late September 2016, a party of eight, six of whom had taken part in at least one of the earlier expeditions, joined Ercihan and his horses, trucked in from Avanos, at Yalvaç, modern Antioch in Pisidia, where St Paul had preached in the synagogue. The ambition was to ride north from Antioch in the direction of Kütahya: a route part of which followed the Phrygian Way (as in Hüseyin Sarı's recently published guide of the same name). This was a stretch of nearly 200 kilometres. It was again offering beauty, interest and more than a hint of adventure, since the route had not been fully reconnoitred.

The modern inconveniences of avoiding burgeoning towns and crossing four-lane highways were compensated for by the prospect of riding through Phrygia's wild uplands, resort of beekeepers and still home to Türkmen and Yörük, and to sheep and goats, donkeys and Anatolian sheepdogs. Wildlife of every sort abounds: eagle, vulture, lynx and wolf. Down in the valleys, where willows line the streams, roads of great antiquity lead through isolated villages, passing temple tombs hewn from tufa and ancient dwellings and churches fashioned from outcrops of pumice or eroded trachyte conglomerate.

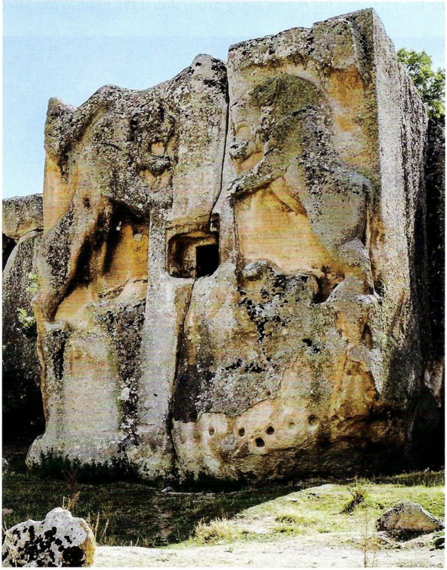
With the Neoclassical Revival, a significant number of 19th-century Orientalists, eager to rediscover the ancient world, travelled Asia Minor's lost routes, many of them exploring Phrygia, with some leaving accounts of the hazards and interests between Pisidian Antioch and Döğer.

The geologist William Hamilton, on his way to the Levant in 1842, approached Antioch from the north, crossing over the 2,960-metre Sultan Mountain range. Below the pass, he enthusiastically noted the impressive remains of the 2nd-century AD aqueduct built to supply the burgeoning city with water during the long, dry summer months. For Ercihan's party, ascending for a second night under canvas, their last glimpse of Antioch in Pisidia was of the Roman aqueduct's tall arches stretching away in the evening mist to disappear into the folds of the Sultan Mountains.

Eight years earlier, the classicist Francis Vyvyan Arundell, then chaplain to the "British Factory" in Smyrna (Izmir), was on a tour of Phrygia with the British consul to Anatolia. He became the first to identify Roman Antioch while looking for the "forsaken city" buried in under-cultivated land north of Lake Eğirdir.

It was 1884 before the New Testament scholar Bishop William Ramsay, on his first visit to Antioch, confirmed both Arundell's findings and, perhaps more pertinently, St Luke's account of Antioch's position in the Acts of the Apostles.

The missionary the Reverend Henry van Lennep rode from Samsun to Smyrna during the summer of 1859. The excessive heat causing exhaustion and sickness, he and his party were constrained to travel by night on the stretch between Sivrihisar and Afyon. Good luck and a wrong turning had taken the party past the strange geological formations of Seyitler. For Van Lennep, these were magically lit by a huge August moon. Bad luck followed: their road led into the



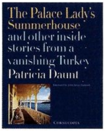
foothills of a mountain of pure, blue-veined white Docimium marble, much prized throughout the Roman world and quarried for the *opus sectile* floors of Emperor Hadrian's villa at Tivoli. The quarries were still open in early Byzantine times, when quantities of the precious marble were transported to Constantinople for use in Ayasofya's vast central pavement.

By the 19th century, the over-exploited marble mountain had been taken over by nature. The age of the trees covering old marble seams in Van Lennep's time indicates that the quarries may have been abandoned for centuries. In *Travels Across Asia Minor* the missionary makes no reference to the fame of the marble, only describing a difficult road of sharp marble chippings shaded by wide-branching cypress and venerable oak which he and his party followed until they were impenetrably lost. Could this be the route that Ercihan's party took on their way to Olukpınar? It is a possibility, if obscured by the mess created by the plethora of newly reopened Roman quarries.

Both Bishop Ramsay and our riders had difficulty in locating the "unmissable" Lion Stone, or Aslankaya, among rocks split by earthquakes millennia before Phrygia was absorbed into the eastern Roman Empire. In 1883, Ramsay had discovered the valley on a lightning spring tour of the Phrygian countryside around Afyon, where he recorded early Christian monuments but had no time to comb the valleys for the Lion Stone. He had declined the imam's offer to show him the monument of a local saint to the north. Instead a tearaway took him south on a wild goose chase – and Ramsay was caught in a thunderstorm for his pains.

Returning in 1891, Ramsay did discover the Aslankaya – beside the saint's tomb where the imam had wanted to take him, six miles north. There, sculpted in high relief on a rock 11 metres high, two magnificent standing lions faced each other, claws unsheathed, with two smaller crouching lions below, which he recorded and sketched.

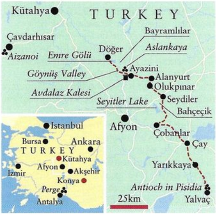
Our riders had to follow behind a manic tractor driver for four miles at a gallop, missing much along the way. That was not their only challenge. Ercihan, the organiser, had recced the route and put together a fine team (a driver, a cook, two grooms and two helping hands as well as himself) to assist the seven equestrian travellers. But not even he foresaw the tempestuous weather. 'Six days in the Saddle', Mark Cator's vivid diary of the ride in 2016, is on the pages that follow.



The Palace Lady's Summerhouse and other inside stories from a vanishing Turkey
Patricia Daunt

Patricia Daunt's new book, 'The Palace Lady's Summerhouse and other inside stories from a vanishing Turkey' (Cornucopia Books, £25), is available from cornucopia.net, post-free worldwide

Then there was the lightning and the thunder; and the horses being taken down the road to the safety of


Kütahya
TURKEY
Çavdarhısar
Aizanoi
Bayramlılar
Aslankaya
Döğer
Emre Gölü
Ayazini
Göynüş Valley
Alanyurt
Olukpınar
Avdalaz Kalesi
Seyitler Lake
Seydiler
Bahçeçik
Afyon
Çobanlar
Çay
Yarıkkaya
Antioch in Pisidia
Yalvaç
25km
Istanbul
Bursa
Ankara
TURKEY
Kütahya
Izmir
Afyon
Akşehir
Konya
Perge
Antalya

SUSANNA HICKLING

SIX DAYS IN THE SADDLE

By Mark Cator

The first night was colder than expected – a lot colder, a lot wetter. And the wind blew, carrying the sparks around Serdar's cooking like a swarm of crazed fireflies. Then there was the lightning and the thunder, and the horses being taken down the road to the safety of the village, disappearing behind a screen of rain, and Serdar seen in silhouette through a horizontal downpour, like a mad alchemist, preventing the chicken from flying the pan, and the rain pinging off the dinner plates, and the tarpaulin winging up into the night sky; and all of us ending up in the shower cubicle attached to the back of the truck, having cocktails and egging each other on to make that final dash to the tents and sleep. The horses were safely tucked up in a stable, and the mountain was throwing down all it had. It was to be a wild night.

It had all begun with a phone call. Ercihan Diları had rung earlier in the year. He was planning a ride from the region around Konya, he had said, along parts of the St Paul's Way, the Evliya Çelebi Way, the Phrygian Way and on to Kütahya. Were my wife Isabel and I interested? I hadn't been sure where any of this was on a map, and had never met Ercihan, but had said yes, then forgotten about it.

Now, several months later, it was morning in the village of Yarıkkaya, and I was drying out in front of a roaring campfire, the previous night's rain evaporating in glorious sunshine, the air filled with the delicious scents of woodsmoke and damp tack, while the horses breakfasted, heads down in their yellow feed buckets, and Ercihan and his crew laughed off the effects of the storm as if this were a nightly occurrence.

I'd heard about Ercihan from other riders, and his reputation was well founded. He's a horseman with a wanderer's spirit and an eclectic understanding of life. He was passionate about his horses, and within the next couple of hours we'd be riding them up over the mountain pass, along the St Paul's Way, making tracks for the village of Çay, at the foot of the northern slopes of this small mountain range.

We'd arrived in Konya two days earlier and headed off to see the tomb of Mevlânâ Celâleddîn-i Rumi, our visit feeling like an unseemly dash, in contrast to the mystic poet's deeply contemplative verses, and we were soon on the road for an overnight stay in Akşehir, before joining the horses the next day in the hamlet of Hisarardı, close to Yalvaç (which means "prophet" in archaic Turkish – possibly a reference to St Paul).

the village, behind a screen of rain; and Serdar seen through a horizontal downpour, like a mad alchemist

THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS
DAY ONE

From Hisarardı we’d ridden past the ruins of Antioch in Pisidia, and out along the track to the impressive remains of a Roman aqueduct built to carry water from springs in the Sultan Mountains to the city’s fountains at a flow of around 3,000 cubic metres each day. Sadly, we had been too early to gain access to the ruins of Antioch itself, but then, with its long history, from the Seleucid Dynasty (330–280 BC) and Roman colonisation to the Byzantines and Ottomans and through to modern-day Turkey, there would never have been enough time. Named after Antiochus, the father of Seleucus I Nicator, this was where Paul the Apostle preached his first sermon after his Damascene conversion.

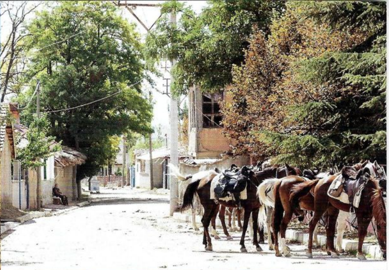
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST PAUL
DAY TWO

As we climbed higher from the village of Yarıkkaya, we passed through a vast, barren, biblical landscape of hills and high plains, where shepherds watched over grazing sheep as the fertile valley dwindled behind us. At the top we hunkered down and lunched on sausage cooked over a fire scrabbled together out of dead grass, before heading down the thinly forested northern slopes towards the open plain of Çay below.

On the descent we met a farming family who welcomed us in for tea. After much banter we were sent on our way with a bulging bag of apples freshly picked by the daughter, as cheerful as she was beautiful, with a smile to break hearts, and though her hand had been asked for in marriage, her father was clearly unwilling to let her go.

Above A farmer’s daughter ‘as cheerful as she was beautiful’
Top Sheep graze as the party pause on the climb into the highlands above Yarikkaya. Lunch was cooked over a fire of dead grass
Opposite The campfire was the domain of Serdar the Cook

Further down we passed a quarry, complete with grinding lorries, stone-crushing and men in hard hats directing operations – in preparation, we would learn, for the building of a new dam. The horses seemed less spooked by the thunderous activity than they were bemused by our navigation, as for the next two hours we rode into, then out of, then around Çay, before following a man on a moped into the dark and finally out onto a large area of common ground, where tent and table were already set up among the pylons, telegraph poles and other furniture of modern life. Occasionally a truck or car would pass nearby. From a cluster of houses came the odd sound of dogs barking under a perfect night sky. Only when I got home would I fully realise the vastness of this country, in space but even more so in time. The land we were riding through seemed a passive inheritor of a history so much larger than its physical geography. Yet the moment to be enjoyed was absolute, enriched by the generous hospitality of Ercihan and his crew. With the handing round of some rakı, and a fine dinner cooked by Serdar, all was good – and dry.



THIS PAGE: A BEAUTIFUL GLADE BY A DRY RIVER BED WHERE THE RIDERS LUNCHED

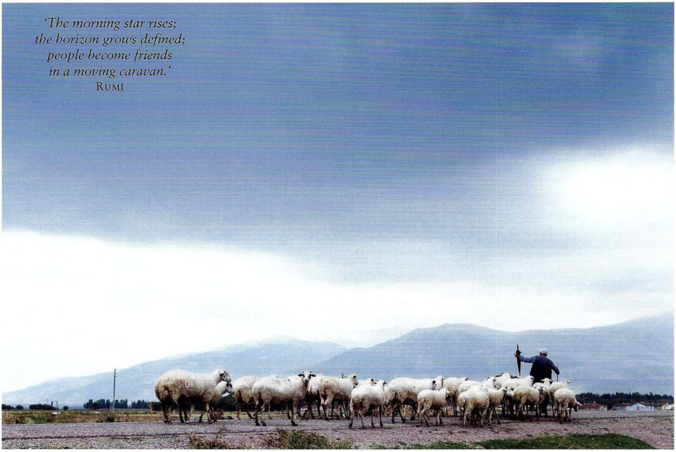
OPPOSITE, TOP ROW: CROSSING THE FERTILE PLAIN; HORSES TETHERED DURING A TEA STOP

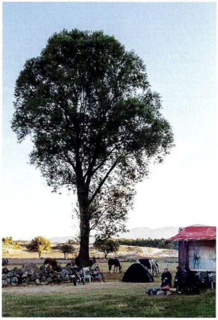
CENTRE ROW: ERCİHAN GETS DIRECTIONS FROM A SHEPHERD FOR THE RENDEZVOUS BY SEYİTLER LAKE; IN THE EVENING, BEFORE ARRIVING, THE PARTY WOULD REST THE HORSES BY WALKING THE LAST MILE – A LOVELY WAY TO ENTER A VILLAGE

BOTTOM: PETER NAHUM'S PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PARTY RIDING OVER THE HILLS BETWEEN OLUKPINAR AND AYAZINI

BOTTOM LEFT: PETER NAHUM. ALL OTHER PHOTOS: MARK CATOR

'The morning star rises;
the horizon grows defined;
people become friends
in a moving caravan.'
Rumi





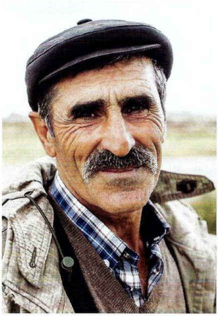
LESSONS IN TURKISHNESS

DAY THREE

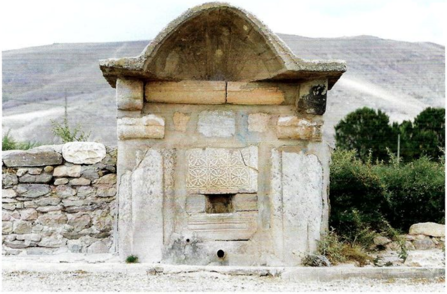
By morning we were settling into a ritual, or the ritual was being settled around us, and as we emerged from our tents the surrounding air resounded with the morning call to prayer. At the communal standpipe an elderly couple had brought their rugs down to clean, and Serdar had spread out a white tablecloth for breakfast, on which were laid out eggs and olives, cheese, meats and coffee.

Here, then, was our own little caravan, making its way along others' pathways. And, as the day ahead was to prove, navigating hills and valleys with this caravan was never going to be without its setbacks.

Our tent and baggage were transported in a uniquely customised old truck drawn by a tractor and driven by Mehmet, who looked, along with the truck itself, every bit an extra from a Mad Max movie. For those of us on horseback, the day promised a short ride, heading west over the valley floor to Çobanlar. As we set out, Ercihan began to explain to me that Turkish is not so much about being a people as it is an idea. And what was this idea? To be able to talk, to live and to laugh with anyone. To a traveller, too, these are essential qualities, honed by experience, by watching and listening and remaining sensitive to a universal sense of being.

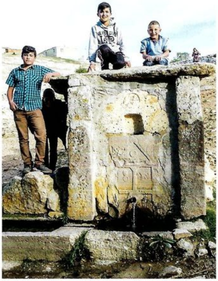


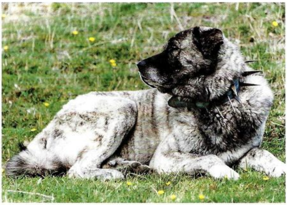
Above A shepherd from the eponymous village of Çobanlar ('Shepherds')
Top Holding an umbrella aloft, another shepherd leads his flock home
Left The picturesque campsite on a meadow outside the village of Alanyurt

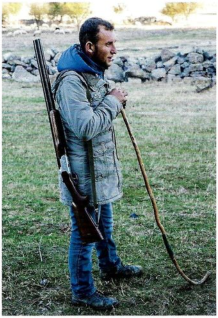


The Turks like to train their horses to kneel down at the word of command and allow their master to mount, and to pick up a walking stick, or cudgel, or sword in their teeth from the ground and give it to the rider on their back… I have noticed horses who stood quite still when their master had been thrown from the saddle."

Ogier de Busbecq





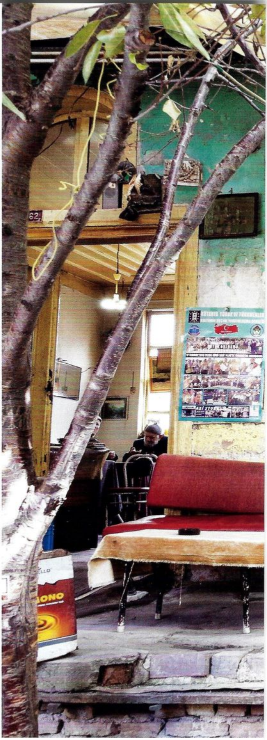


Above A shepherd with gun and crook
Top A roadside fountain built from stone carvings and old sarcophagi
Middle row A horse grazes under an old willow with twisted trunk; another ancient trough; a kangal, the noble Anatolian sheepdog, with a spiked collar to protect against attacking wolves

We were leaving the St Paul Way and beginning to link up with the Phrygian Way. These were no signs on the road, just the lines of history, disputed memories, and the hidden markers of time itself. The landscape reminded me of the Fens back home in Norfolk, with drained land bordered by ditches, and straight roads overhung with hoary old willows.

The weather had grown steadily warmer – the warmth of a threatening storm, or at the very least some rain. On arriving at Çobanlar, Isabel, Sharron, Karin and Katie were hijacked by an excited group of ladies who, on hearing the approach of our horses, popped out of the communal bakery and beckoned to them to come in and watch their bread-making. The men were told to wait, and wait we did, in the heat of the day, in the quiet of the village, gazing at the huge nests of storks on top of the telegraph poles. The white stork is regularly hunted along its migration route, but here in Anatolia storks are regarded as guests and known locally as *hacı leylek*, or "pilgrim storks". Every year some 6.5 million birds of many different species migrate between Europe, Asia and Africa, using two major flyways over Anatolia. In the surrounding fields and pastures, scores of swallows were busily feeding on insects, building up their reserves before their own journey south. The complexity of pathways across this land, made by both man and animal, seemed unending.

If the bread-making had been the preserve of the women, the bargaining for a goat was that of the men. Not that I had a clue as to what or where or how the haggling was being directed. Shepherds seemed to be flocking in, an impartial referee seemed to be missing, and the assembled sheep and goats were apparently indifferent to their fate. Then it stopped, as all agreed that the strong taste of goat would not be fully appreciated by us migratory beings. By now the sultry weather had finally turned to rain, so we all made for the spa town of Afyon and a Turkish bath. Here, once more, women and men were strictly kept apart.



SHEEPISH OBSERVATIONS

DAY FOUR

We awoke to the sight of swallows pitching and diving and feeding voraciously. Out beyond where the goods train was shunting I spotted a couple of hoopoes and some cranes flying high. In camp, Gökhan and Ahmet were watering and feeding the horses, Serdar making breakfast, Mehmet attending to all things mechanical and any shoeing that might be necessary, while Ercihan and Erdinç were planning routes and rendezvous for the day ahead.

Out along the road shepherds were walking, or riding, the routes out they had taken in the night before, their flocks of sheep and goats loyally following on, or being cajoled into doing so. This timeless observation had me thinking of Ogier de Busbecq's letters, recalling his experiences while travelling to the court of Süleyman the Magnificent. Busbecq was the Archduke Ferdinand's envoy to Turkey from 1554 to 1562 and admired for presenting to Europe and his Habsburg masters a more-than-usually balanced impression of the Ottomans. I had read his letters before coming out, and was captivated by his spirited view.

On leaving the area of Çobanlar we rode along a broad ditch, took a shortcut – short enough to bring us back to where we had begun. We then had a magnificent canter, checked the maps and settled down for tea in a small café in the centre of a village, with our horses close by, before standing down for an early lunch in a landfill site that, strangely, didn't seem far from where we had had breakfast. It had been one of those mornings and, from afar, we must have looked like road-weary gypsies banished to the edge of town.

The afternoon found us on a route out of the plain and into the hills. Ancient sarcophagi were routinely being used as water troughs, shepherds roamed, and as far as the eye could see there were vast areas of unbounded, cultivated land, with earth as red as the sky was blue. Having ridden past several hamlets and small plots of land planted with tomatoes and peppers, we crested our final hill and dropped down to the dam on Seyitler Lake near the village of Bahçecik. The location was idyllic, camp was set and, after a quick visit to Bahçecik for wood, a fire was burning. With a bitter wind blowing out of the east, at this high altitude it was to be another cold night.

UNHAPPY THE BRIDE

DAY FIVE

Morning arrived with a clear blue sky and a sharp chill in the air. I walked to the ridge overlooking the lake and fell in step with a shepherd moving his sheep with military precision across overgrazed hills, his long stick twitching like a bandmaster's baton, and his soft commands of "Tschh, tschh," audible over the breeze. Down below, the sun was up over the camp, a pink glow hung on the distant hills, duck and geese were rising off the lake, and the horses were being readied. I headed back down and after breakfast we rode out along the edge of the lake, watching black storks and flamingoes feed in the shallow waters while fathers and young sons enjoyed a day out fishing.

On leaving the lake, the landscape was, weirdly, given over to marble. There were quarries and factories, stone walls were patched with marble, there was marble embedded in the track, great slabs of it were used as fencing, or for fixing a hole in a house. Amid this marble world we realised we were lost, and in no time willing guides were pointing this way and that, and mothers appeared from nowhere to hoist their children onto our horses, paying us with apples for the rides.

After crossing a newly constructed, and thankfully not too busy, dual carriageway, we climbed steeply into the hills, had a run-in with a couple of loose stallions, cantered through meadows, ate our apples

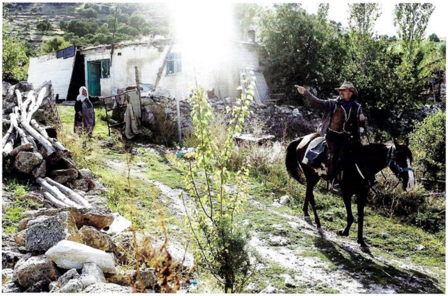
'There's no one with intelligence
in this town except that man
over there playing with the children,
the one riding the stick horse.
He has keen, fiery insight and vast
dignity like the night sky,
but he conceals it in the madness
of child's play.'
RUMI

for lunch, rode through the village of Olukpınar and then a couple more miles to our camp near the village of Alanyurt. The tents had been set along the edge of meadow close to some stone walls and a stream, and the rest of our caravan had unpacked around a blazing campfire.

Since setting out on this journey we had been everywhere welcomed in Anatolia. Riding into villages at dusk, we had been assured of an enthusiastic welcome. Stopping by the roadside, we would be invited into people's homes or offered gifts of bread or cakes. On the numerous occasions when we lost our way, we had been enthusiastically ushered back onto the right route, even if it did sometimes turn out to be the wrong route. On this night, no sooner had we unsaddled and washed than the chief from Olukpınar drove up in his car to invite us all to a wedding – in half an hour, no less, as the bride was about to arrive. A hasty return to the tents and we had exchanged our campfire attire for something a little more worthy of a celebration.

For those of us brought up in Church of England traditions, the night's wedding celebrations were to be very different, albeit as ritualised, with feasting and dancing. Some of the village elders, appearing out of the gloom, fired off their pistols, while a mix of European club and Turkish music boomed from a

ABOVE A COFFEE SHOP IN AN OLD QUARTER OF KÜTAHYA, THE RIDERS' ULTIMATE DESTINATION AND HOME OF TURKEY'S STILL-FLOURISHING CERAMICS INDUSTRY. A RANDOM ARRAY OF TILES WITH FRAGMENTS OF PRAYERS MAKES A GRAPHIC BACKDROP OPPOSITE THE SUN RISES OVER IDYLLIC SEYİTLER LAKE, NEAR THE VILLAGE OF BAHÇECİK (LITTLE GARDEN). A BITTER WIND BLOWS OUT OF THE EAST



'But they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down… 'Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, give it.' So Paul stood up and with a gesture began to speak.'

Acts 13 v14–16

makeshift trailer that housed the two DJs.

Our party were as shy and awkward as kids at a school dance, until the young boys dragged us into the melee. Meanwhile the women had been ushered over to another part of the square to dance with the bride and to attach money to her dress. I'm not sure that I saw the groom, and I wasn't even sure which part of the celebration we had burst in on, but it seemed the entire village was present and having a wild and happy time – apart from the bride, who, trussed up in her beautiful if tight-fitting dress, appeared at times utterly miserable.

OVER THE HILLS TO AYAZİNİ

DAY FIVE

The weather had become a lot more settled, and before we had finished breakfast the village chief was back, once more insistent that we join the wedding party, this time on horseback. As we rode up the steep hill and entered the crowded square, the two DJs, who appeared not to have moved since the night before, blazed out an ear-shattering club song, as red scarves were tied to our horses' bridles and small children were launched onto our saddles. If this was all a bit much for us, it was worse for the horses, and almost caused a stampede back down the hill.

An orderly exit was signalled by Ercihan, and we set off with much waving and promises of eternal friendship, as a gaggle of boys on bikes saw us to the outskirts of the village and up over the hills as far as their bikes would allow.

Within a few hours of leaving Olukpınar we were riding along hilltops and among Byzantine tombs now serving as storerooms for hay and housing for animals. Many had their original paintings and carvings, while others bore the black scorch marks from recent fires made by shepherds. The rest of the day was spent scrambling up hills and jogging down valleys, to arrive at dusk in Ayazini.

The villagers were just bringing their animals in from their grazing. Harvested crops were being gathered up from household courtyards after a day's drying in the sun, while in backyards peas were podded by hand. Our camp had been pitched on the far side of the village, in a gully dotted with old cave dwellings and Byzantine tombs.

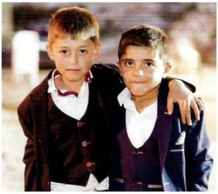
LUNCH WITH THE LIONS

DAY SIX

The rocky hillside rising above Ayazini is lined with tombs, with churches, with tombs converted into churches, and with houses built or carved into the soft stone. In the early morning children were making their way to school around the bustle of traders, farmers and shepherds heading out to the plains with their animals. We rode through the centre of the village, then up along a track that took us to the top of the escarpment and Avdalaz Castle. The castle itself resembles a large rock set within a cluster of the dramatic outcrops that dominate this high plain. It is a honeycomb of interlinked dwellings and stairways with a commanding view of the surrounding land, craggy and pockmarked as a sponge.

On leaving the castle we trailed the Phrygian Valley, by default the elusive Phrygian Way, and, since all "ways" have their own routes, so did ours. Since beginning this ride, local knowledge had been invaluable, even if that knowledge didn't always seem to square with a given understanding of direction; so for a four-mile stretch we followed a tractor-driving farmer at full gallop. This little escapade was much enjoyed by the horses but, as we sped past sunken churches and toppled stone sculptures from ancient civilisations, it was far from the quiet archaeological browsing we had intended.

'Dogs bark
but the caravan moves on'
OLD TURKISH PROVERB



Having decided that none of what we were speeding past was worth bothering about, the farmer finally came to a stop in a cloud of dust and suggested that right here was where we were to have lunch. Who could argue? "Here" was in the shadow of Aslankaya, the great Lion Stone, most impressive of the lion tombs in the heart of the Göynüş (Köhnüş) Valley, as the Phrygian Valley is more properly known.

In the afternoon we cantered through pine and oak scrub, across wide-open fields and along a high ridge before descending into Bayramlılar, a landscape of lunar mapping, fairy chimneys and sculpted sandstone formations that took on an animation of their own. The ancient cart track running through the pass at the top of the valley was deeply rutted by centuries of passing travellers, and subsequently fossilised into a rock-hard carapace.

Our campsite was at the bottom of the adjoining river valley and clearly on the main route of the shepherds bringing in their flocks for the night. It was also on the route of the local fire brigade, returning from practice, who called in with empty stomachs just as the "hot-coal chicken dinner" was being pulled from the ashes. A riotous night ensued.

ABOVE AND TOP A WEDDING IN OLUKPINAR, A LIVELY, FRIENDLY OCCASION OF EATING, DANCING AND ELDERLY MEN FIRING OFF PISTOLS INTO THE NIGHT AIR. YOUNG BOYS MADE SURE GUESTS ALL DANCED IN THE WILDEST FASHION. THE BRIDE SEEMED AS BEMUSED AS THE RIDERS

RIGHT AND TOP RIGHT THRESHING AND CROP-DRYING IN AYAZİNİ, WHERE THE WELCOME LIFTED ANY FLAGGING SPIRITS

OPPOSITE, TOP LOCAL KNOWLEDGE PROVIDED TRADITIONAL NAVIGATION, AS MOST OF THE RIDING WAS ON INTERWEAVING TRACKS

BOTTOM SLABS OF MARBLE WERE USED AS FENCES, WALLS, EVEN TO MEND POTHOLES

'This earth will cool down one day,
not even like a pile of ice
or like a dead cloud, it will roll
like an empty walnut in the pure
endless darkness. You must feel the
pain of this now. You must
feel the grief right now. You must
love this world so much to be
able to say 'I lived.'
Nazim Hikmet

GOODBYE TEAM, FAREWELL HORSES

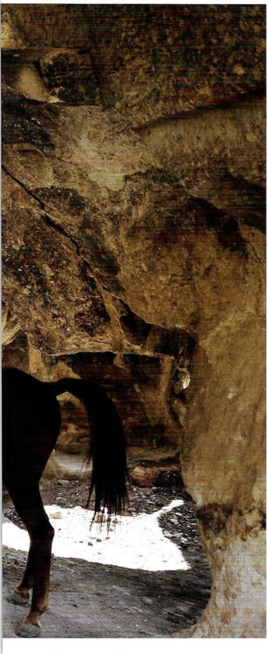
DAY SEVEN

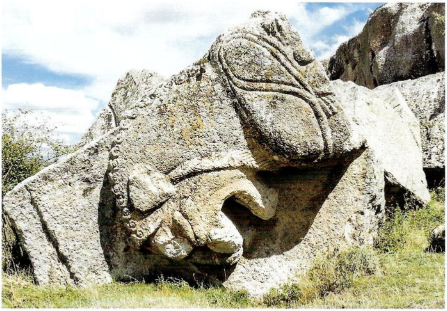
It was the perfect morning for Isabel's breakfast birthday party of eggy bread, cooked by Ercihan – bright sun, cool air, the tea urn all fired up and the horses at the ready. Today was to be our last ride, taking us out towards Döğer, along the southern shore of Lake Emre, then back along the north shore for lunch at camp. I was keen to get up close to a building visible on the horizon that was a solid square of architecture.

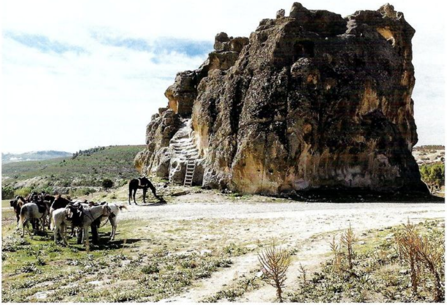
There was little information, only that it had possibly been used as a Byzantine church and then at some time by dervishes. Close by was a rock formation known as Kırkmerdiven Kayalıkları (Forty-Steps Rock). Ours was a gentle ride around this idyllic lake, followed by a quick lunch, a goodbye to a remarkable team (Erdinç, Mehmet, Serdar, Gökhan, Ahmet), a farewell to the horses and a fast drive to Kütahya with Ercihan and Karin Anduleit, his fellow organiser.

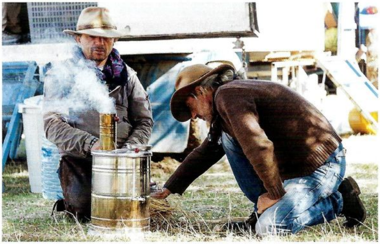
We arrived late in Kütahya and took a walk through the old town, with its overhanging houses, small ceramicists' workshops and multiplicity of trades and stores. In the evening, celebrations continued with Isabel's birthday dinner, crowned by chocolate cake spiked with a fizzing sparkler, and endless toasts of rakı to the passing of time, Turkey, Ercihan, horses and a sensational ride.

The following day we visited the excellent Archaeological Museum of Kütahya, with its wealth of Byzantine and

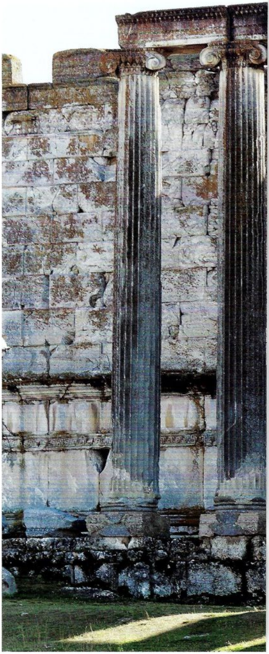








Above Karin Anduleit, who helped to lead the expedition, waits in the shade of Byzantine tombs built into the rocky outcrops between the villages of Alanyurt and Ayazini
Top right A glimpse of the famous toppled 'Snakestone' as the riders barrel along the Göynüş Valley, led by a high-spirited farmer on a tractor
Above right The horses are tethered in front of the honeycomb of dwellings that make up Avdalez Castle
Right Life in Turkey begins after a cup of tea. The samovar was invaluable



Phrygian antiquities, including a sarcophagus from the ancient Roman city of Aizanoi decorated with an elaborate scene of a battle with Amazons. In the afternoon we drove out to the ruins of Aizanoi, about 25 kilometres southwest of Kütahya and close to Çavdarhisar. It was an extraordinary experience to walk freely and alone through this site, while to witness ancient history in the theatre of the real was quite bizarre.

Time and earthquakes have toppled much of the original structures, but the theatre and stadium, the Temple of Zeus, the necropolis and the *macellum* (indoor market), complete with the Price Edict of Diocletian at its centre, are there to be imagined in all their glory. ◆

Main picture One of the best-preserved Roman temples anywhere, the Temple of Zeus in Aizanoi, south of Kütahya, was built for Hadrian in the 2nd century
Above Kütahya's Archaeological Museum is an essential stop before visiting the ruins. This is a detail from a sarcophagus
Right Carvings from the necropolis
Far right One of the riders takes a rest in the theatre, begun after 160AD and finished in the 3rd century. Here earthquakes have taken their toll

A photojournalist for many years, Mark Cator, *who took the pictures for this article, fell in love with riding in 2015 when he joined Patricia Daunt on a ride in the foothills of the Great Caucasus. Since then he has ridden in Jordan, Botswana and Mongolia. Now based in Norfolk, in 2018 he set up the UtterBooks art photography project (utterbooks.com)*

Travel Notes and Reading
For information on rides with Ercihan Diları, see hoofprinttrails.com.

For riding or trekking along waymarked routes, consult Kate Clow's guidebooks listed below (also available from cornucopia.net) or go to trekkinginturkey.com.

☐ *The Evliya Çelebi Way: Turkey's first long-distance walking and riding route*, by Caroline Finkel and Kate Clow with Donna Landry (£16.95)
☐ *The Lycian Way: Turkey's first long-distance walking route*, by Kate Clow (£15.99)
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Lenin's éminence grise

Prodigiously talented and duplicitous, Parvus Efendi was a larger-than-life writer, arms dealer, fixer and bon vivant. Norman Stone sizes up the grand capitalist who oiled the wheels of the Russian Revolution and ingratiated himself with the Young Turks

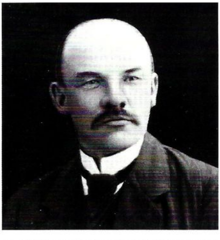
The title of a classic romantic account of the rise of Socialism by the American critic Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station*, refers to the journey taken by Lenin at the start of the Russian Revolution, through wartime Germany to a rapturous red-flag reception at the St Petersburg terminal of the Finnish railway. In 1940, when Wilson wrote, capitalism was in bad odour, and Socialism offered a new dawn.

On April 9, 1917, Vladimir Ilyitch Ulyanov (the name Lenin was born with), his cantankerous wife and two dozen companions embarked at Zurich, where they had lived in exile, and proceeded to the German border. As enemy aliens they needed special protection, and were joined by two officers detailed to see them safely through to Berlin and the Baltic. A little sign of the dictatorship to come was that the train was the first no-smoking one in history. Lenin hated cigarettes: his addicted companions had to sneak into the lavatory. They reached Russia a week later, and Lenin launched his revolutionary programme. By November he had seized power.

DAVID KING COLLECTION

AGENTS OF REVOLUTION: PARVUS (LEFT) WITH LEON TROTSKY (CENTRE) AND LEO DEUTSCH IN THE HOUSE OF DETENTION, ST PETERSBURG, 1906. PARVUS WOULD LATER ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA

Getting the German Foreign Office to set up Lenin's journey had taken some doing. Scruffy revolutionaries had to deal with parchment-faced aristo-bureaucrats through left-wing Swiss intermediaries before the business was concluded, but the Germans were in something of a hurry, because the USA had just declared war, envoys were queuing up in the Wilhelmstrasse to follow their lead, and the Germans were desperate to knock Russia out of the war – something Lenin, they thought, could arrange. The man who had given them this idea was one Parvus, who had presented the plan to the ambassador in Istanbul, Freiherr von Wangenheim.



A STRIKING PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PHOTOGRAPH OF LENIN IN 1910. HE DISTRUSTED PARVUS

The name Parvus (was an alias, and something of a joke, for the man was huge. Registered in Istanbul as Moise Gelfand, he had been born (in 1867) as Israel Lazarevitch Gelfand, sometimes transcribed from the Cyrillic as Helphand. He was an Odessa Jew, but Jewishness meant nothing at all to him, and he changed his first name to Alexander. In Istanbul he was very rich, and well connected enough to have Wangenheim's ear. But he had not always been very rich. Until well into his forties he was a revolutionary exile, living from hand to mouth, latterly from dodgy publishing ventures, from other people's hands. In 1910 he turned up penniless in Istanbul, and through adventures in arms deals that have never quite been catalogued, made money, buying a grand house on the island of Büyükada.

His usefulness to the Germans came about because, from his past, he knew the revolutionaries in Edmund Wilson's pantheon, including Trotsky (to whom he apparently suggested the doctrine of "permanent revolution", which some of us only understand as Marx turning in his grave). Parvus had much the same background as many of them – a clever schoolboy (the Bolsheviks always came top in maths), sent to university abroad because Jews had difficulty entering Russian universities (girls could only attend St Petersburg University if they registered as prostitutes). He went to Basel, where he studied physics and economics, and only just scraped a doctorate, the examiners disliking his Marxism. He fell in with Russian exiles like himself and, along with many of them, gravitated towards the German Socialists, taking part in the now-forgotten rows over "revisionism" and the revolutionary general strike, as advocated by Rosa Luxemburg, with whom he had a brief affair. He acquired excellent German (and other languages) and turned out to have prodigious journalistic talent, contributing heavyweight articles in thick journals on the technicalities of finance, agriculture and foreign trade.

In 1905, when the first Russian Revolution erupted, he returned to St Petersburg and had a hand in organising the Soviet. He was arrested and sent to Siberia, but escaped and turned his hand to German publishing, getting the right to publish Gorky. There were ugly rumours that Parvus had defrauded Gorky, and his career did not flourish. By 1910, penniless and without family (like Trotsky, he abandoned women and children), he proceeded via Vienna to Istanbul. And there, rather mysteriously, his career took off. We do not quite know how. He destroyed his own papers.

Left-wing Turks have been interested enough in his writings, but have not so far looked into the practical side. However, much can be guessed. There had been a revolution in Turkey in 1908–09, when Abdülhamid II was at last overthrown, and a Committee of Union and Progress took over. A British observer would have said of their name, "choose two", for they were in many ways naïve, open to suggestion. This attracted adventurers – in the manner of Browning's Pied Piper: "Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,/ Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,/ Grave old plodders, gay young friskers" – but a free press came into existence.

Parvus Efendi set up in the grandest hotel in Zurich, surrounding himself with young women, and drinking a bottle of champagne at breakfast

This was Parvus's opportunity. In a muddled way, the Young Turks (as the world called the Committee) understood that they were trapped: their revenues were earmarked to pay off foreign bondholders; they could not collect tariffs because of foreigners' legal privileges, could not even run their own post office or plan their own railways. Parvus, with his Marxist understanding of imperialism, could explain their resentments systematically, and he wrote learnedly but clearly on all such subjects (including agriculture) in the new newspapers and periodicals. He even produced a book in 1912 on Ottoman finance. He won the confidence of the Young Turks' financial expert, Cavid Bey, and was given a lease of agricultural land in Thrace.

A Tsarist secret police mugshot of Lenin's wife, Nadya Krupskaya

But he did not forget his revolutionary vocation. When war broke out in 1914 he welcomed it as a chance to destroy Tsarist Russia, and ardently took the Germans' part. It was for this that Wangenheim received him and listened to his ideas. Parvus said that with German money he could establish a revolutionary network in Russia, complete with newspapers and plans for sabotage. Wangenheim sent him to Berlin, where, in the spring of 1915, he wrote a 20-page memorandum containing a detailed programme.

At this stage of the war, even the chief of the general staff, Erich von Falkenhayn, was telling the Kaiser that "if we do not lose this war, we shall have won it", and was anxious for Russia to drop out. Parvus was therefore given the wherewithal. The money could be got into Russia because there was still a certain amount of trade, through Denmark, for the Russians needed German optical and medical goods, and Parvus established a sociological research institute (not entirely bogus) which would employ his agents. This was run by one Jakob Haniecki, also known as Fürstenberg, who was wholly plausible, and a Russian network was indeed established, with underground newspapers.

In January 1916 the first of the pre-Revolutionary strikes broke out. Parvus went to see Lenin in May 1915, trying to interest him, but here he ran into a considerable snag: Lenin did not trust him. By now Parvus was used to the good life, and he set up in the grandest hotel in Zurich, surrounding himself with young women and drinking a bottle of champagne at breakfast. If it had been known that Lenin was taking German money, the Bolshevik cause could have been ruined, and thereafter the two men dealt only through intermediaries (of whom Haniecki was the main one). But Parvus continued, through the German ministers at Copenhagen, Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau, and at Berne a Baron von Romberg, to supervise proceedings. When the Russian Revolution broke out in March 1917, the machinery was ready for the transfer of Lenin.

In power, Lenin promoted Haniecki-Fürstenberg, but he dropped Parvus entirely, and so did the German left-wing Socialists, Rosa Luxemburg especially, who called him "a whore". He could not go back to Turkey, and tried living in Switzerland, but was expelled. In the end he bought a villa on the Wannsee in Berlin, and tried his luck again as a German publisher, holding grand dinner parties, trying to establish himself in the politics of the Weimar Republic. Honest people sneered.

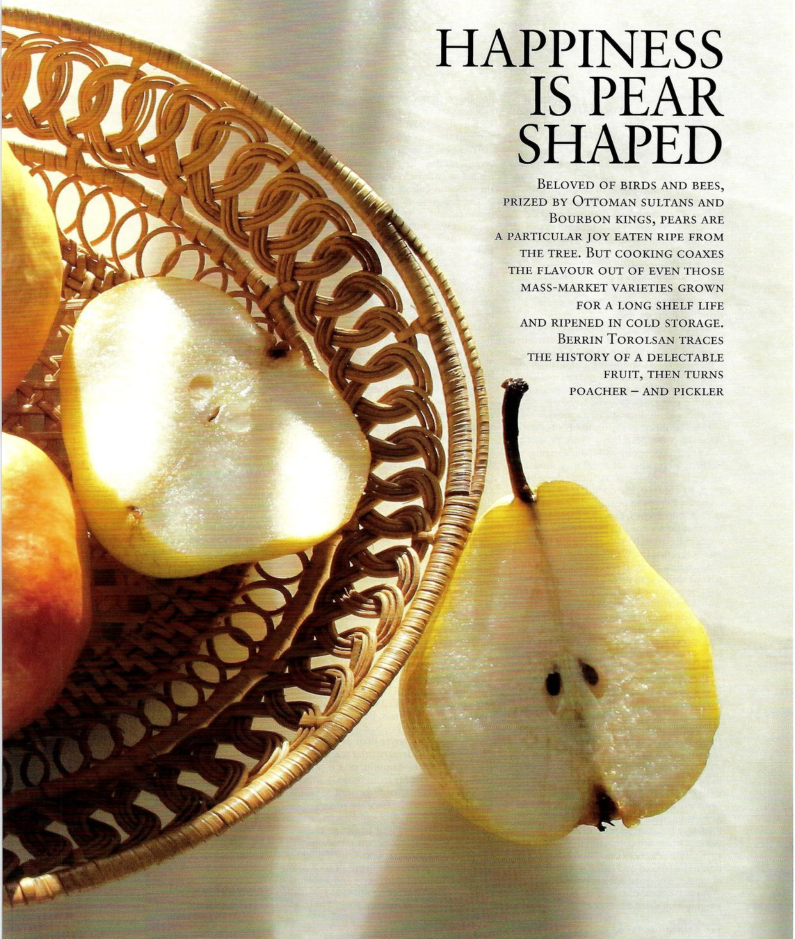
As to his activities before and during the war, he was secretive, and made a bonfire of his archives. There is to Parvus more than a little of Robert Maxwell, also (in a way) Ukrainian-Jewish, also with murky Communist connections, also an astute but thieving publisher, also a grand capitalist, also grossly overweight.

In 1924, aged 57, Parvus died of a heart attack, to generally hostile obituaries – in the end, the biggest of the Browning rats in pre-war Istanbul, although his writings (recently collected by Cenk Beyaz: *Parvus Efendi*, Istanbul, 2013) are still a great deal more interesting than anything that might have been written by Robert Maxwell. ◆

Norman Stone's books include 'The Eastern Front 1914–1917' (Macmillan 1975, Penguin 1998), 'Turkey: A Short History' (Thames & Hudson, 2010) and World War Two: A Short History' (Allen Lane, 2013). The photographs are from the collection of the late David King (davidkingcollection.com)

The Devecİ pear, a robust cultivar with a becoming blush, starts fruiting in late autumn and carries on until spring. It was only discovered in 1960, growing wild in a Turkish forest near the Black Sea

PHOTOGRAPHS: BERRIN TOROLSAN



HAPPINESS IS PEAR SHAPED

BELOVED OF BIRDS AND BEES, PRIZED BY OTTOMAN SULTANS AND BOURBON KINGS, PEARS ARE A PARTICULAR JOY EATEN RIPE FROM THE TREE. BUT COOKING COAXES THE FLAVOUR OUT OF EVEN THOSE MASS-MARKET VARIETIES GROWN FOR A LONG SHELF LIFE AND RIPENED IN COLD STORAGE. BERRIN TOROLSAN TRACES THE HISTORY OF A DELECTABLE FRUIT, THEN TURNS POACHER – AND PICKLER

The celebrated French herbalist Maurice Mességué calls the pear tree "happiness itself" in his 1970s book *Mon Herbier de Santé*, comparing the soft lines of the luscious fruit to those of a beautiful woman. And it is not only we humans who find pears so appealing. In spring, bees swarm to the white blossoms to collect pollen. The caterpillars that feed on the leaves will metamorphose into butterflies that feed on the juices of overripe, fallen fruit. Bears can't resist feasting on them. I even have a memory, from long ago, of a tortoise indulging in a pear that had fallen from a tree in our garden. I can never forget the expression of relish, eyes closed, juice dripping from its chin.

The pear belongs to the Rosaceae family and, like its cousin the apple, originated in the foothills of the Tien Shan Mountains – literally, the Heavenly Mountains – in Central Asia, where the forests of modern Kyrgyzstan still harbour a wide range of wild fruit and nuts believed to be the ancestors of all domesticated species.

Long confined to the orchards of eastern Asia, the Asian pear, *Pyrus pyrifolia*, more commonly known by its Japanese name, *nashi*, is a crunchy, spherical fruit similar to an apple that only recently made the journey west. By contrast, the countless varieties of common European pear, *Pyrus communis*, with its curvaceous, tapering form and soft, fragrant flesh – the product of millennia of cross-pollination by nature and the hand of man – reached the West long ago.

Since time immemorial pears have been part of the human diet, whether gathered wild or cultivated, eaten fresh or dried and stored for winter. Their abundance is evident from charred wild pears and pips unearthed at Neolithic sites in Switzerland and recently at Vinča in Serbia, on the banks of the Danube, one of the largest settlements in prehistoric Europe.

Turkey is rich in wild pears. The late Polish botanist Kazimierz Browicz recorded five species endemic to Anatolia, ranging from *Pyrus anatolica*, which grows abundantly around Uşak in the west, to *Pyrus hakkarica* in Hakkari on Anatolia's eastern frontier.

Known as *ahlat*, wild pears are collected in Anatolia to this day and sold fresh at village markets. Some of these hard, tart pears are kept in storage, a process known as bletting, used also for the naturally acidic medlar, which turns them mellow and sweet. Others are cored and threaded on string, like pear necklaces, and hung out to dry, to be soaked and eaten as compotes in winter, like dried apricots and prunes.

A coarse flour obtained by pounding vitamin-rich dried pears is added to bread dough, or combined with *pekmez* (grape molasses) to make a gruel. Local customs such as these must have filtered down through the ages from a prehistoric diet.

Wild pear trees growing singly or in small groups on the edges of forests are also valued as grafting rootstock for propagating the delicious cultivars that grace our tables.

The pear was most probably first domesticated in its Asian homeland, long before it was anything but wild food in the West. The Turkish name, *armut*, is shared today by all the nations of Central Asia, with but slight variations – *armıt* in Turkestan, *almurut* in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, *almurt* in Kazakhstan and *armud* in Azerbaijan. The fruit was called *armut* even when the lexicographer Mahmud al Kasgarî, who lived in the Tarım Basin in old Turkestan (now China), compiled his mammoth dictionary of Turkic languages, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, in 1070. Such was the pear culture at the time that there was a long-forgotten verb – *armutlanmak* – used to describe a pear tree beginning to fruit. How far back, one wonders, does that go?

Two centuries later, in the reign of Genghis Khan's grandson Kublai Khan, Marco Polo reports on the opulence of the great city of Kinsay, modern Hangchow in China, where "markets make a daily display of every kind of vegetable and fruit… in particular, certain pears of enormous size, weighing as much as ten pounds apiece, the pulp of which is white and fragrant like a confection".

By the 17th century the orchards of Malatya in southeast Anatolia were producing a delectable pear known as *göksulu* that weighed a mere three pounds (1.4kg). It was one of some 80 varieties grown in the region, according to another renowned traveller, the Ottoman courtier Evliya Çelebi, who also mentioned an exceptional pear from Beypazarı, not far from Ankara, a round green fruit "as succulent and tasty as sugar *helva*". He saw large quantities packed in boxes, neatly wrapped in raw cotton, bound for Istanbul.

Imperial Bursa, too, had a rich pear heritage, with no fewer than 40 varieties. There Evliya made particular mention of the small town of Armutlu, on the Sea of Marmara, not far from Bursa, which he described as crammed "from hill to plain" with pear orchards, hence the town's name – *armutlu* is, loosely, "pear country".

Trabzon, Amasra and Ladik, on the Black Sea, all used to produce fine, juicy pears with descriptive names, including the *beyarmudu* (pear of the lords, or lord of the pears), which had both early and winter cultivars. This variety travelled as far as the kitchen gardens of the Sun King, Louis XIV. His gardener, Jean-Baptiste de la Quintinie, who created the *potager du roi* at Versailles, knowing of his sovereign's fondness for pears, included the noble *beyarmudu* in his collection of 50 varieties.

La Quintinie, an intellectual aristocrat and horticultural genius, took pride in decorating the royal table with countless baskets of fresh fruit, both seasonal and forced. It was de rigueur at the Sun King's court to finish a meal with fresh fruit. In his manual *Instruction pour les jardins fruitiers et potagers*, published after his death in 1688, he listed 24 early and late varieties of "*bergamots*" (derived from the Turkish *beyarmudu*), all favourites of the king. Curiously, there is no connection with the bergamot orange (*Citrus bergamia*), the citrus fruit known as *bergamot* in both English and Turkish (*beyarmudu* simply returned to Turkish in a corrupted form).

Thanks to La Quintinie, France became a country of pears in the 17th century. The fashion soon spread to neighbouring countries. Buttery, white-fleshed varieties such as autumn bergamot, York bergamot and French bergamot became known in England. Likewise, the Italian *bergamotta* became *Osterbergamotte*, *Schweizerbergamotte*, *Donauers Bergamotte* or *Deutsche Nationalbergamotte*, to list just a few of the German names of these melting, voluptuously shaped (*bergamottenförmig*) pears.

Just as European aristocrats of the 17th and 18th centuries developed an interest in horticulture, so Ottoman grandees were obsessed with growing the largest vegetable, the tastiest fruit, the perfect flower. The *Yemiş Odası*, or Fruit Room, in Topkapı Palace – the private reading room of Ahmed III – is painted from ceiling to skirting with murals of fruits and flowers. Neat piles of elongated pears are seen next to figs, peaches and apricots.

New cultivars, often remembered by their grower's name, would include the *Mustabey armudu* (Mustafa Bey pear), dedicated to the poet and court musician Buhurîzade Mustafa Efendi, who lived in Istanbul in the same era. His pen name, İtrî, or Fragrant, derives from his scented garden.

The old cultivars, propagated to perfection though selection or grafting for five centuries by Ottoman gardeners, disappeared one by one, like the imperial orchards themselves. Today the town of Armutlu, whose dense pear orchards were so admired by Evliya, is a seaside conurbation. Alas, we have no idea of the colour, shape, size or flavour of the precious sultanic *sultanî*, the Turkish *Türkî*, the translucent *sabunî* or the sugar-sweet *şekerî*.

However, the Sea of Marmara is still a

A SINGLE PEAR IS ALL YOU NEED FOR THIS SIMPLE, SCRUMPTIOUS CAKE. IT IS ALSO A DELICIOUS DESSERT FRESH FROM THE OVEN, TOPPED WITH CREAM

centre of pear production, even if crops tend to be imported hybrids, as demanded by global markets. They include the apple-like Asian pear, *nashi*, which finally made the journey across Asia. Bursa's orchards produce some 170,000 tons of pears each year, among them a few of the old cultivars, such as the early *akça*, a small pear with delicate, whitish peel and fragrant flesh. Another sought-after early variety is *Haziran Güzeli*, June Beauty, a small, sweet, greenish fruit with rosy cheeks.

The best-known old variety, the roundish, green *Ankara armudu*, which takes its name from the capital, is exceptionally sweet-tasting if allowed to ripen on the branch. Generally grafted onto wild pears and quite resilient, it is harvested in late autumn and has a shelf life that lasts through the winter months, qualities that make it commercially profitable and are possibly the secret of its survival. These must surely be the juicy, *helva*-like pears in Beypazarı praised by Evliya in the 17th century that were sent in boxes to Istanbul. In 1717 the French botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort also spoke highly of the "orchards and kitchen gardens" of Beypazarı in *A Voyage into the Levant*: "Hence come those excellent Pears sold at Constantinople, by the name of Angora Pears." But when he was there in early November, "they were very backward" and he "had not the good fortune to taste them".

A newcomer to the market stalls of Istanbul is the *Deveci* pear, a fruit that makes both farmers and buyers happy. It can be large, sometimes very large. The story of this toothsome pear goes back to a spring morning in 1960 when a Black Sea farmer, Lütfi Deveci, stumbled on a pear in the undergrowth while out shooting. He was amazed, as other fruit trees were just blossoming, but here was a firm, fully developed fruit lying on the ground. Hunting around for the tree, he found it still bearing a few pears, and took cuttings, which he grafted onto pear trees of Italian and French origin in his own garden. The result was a success story. Because this pear grows abundantly, keeps for a long time and is resistant to frost and cold storage, it is clearly very profitable.

In today's commercial world, the survival of pear varieties is dictated by shelf life. Unlike apples, pears won't keep when ripe, so even naturally sweet types are bletted on a grand scale, harvested unripe and left to ripen in cold storage. But forget genetically modified supermarket products. The delicate, melting texture of a real pear from the garden, ripened on the branch, is a divine experience, and it can be a visual feast, with that alluring pear shape (*armudî* in old Turkish), uplifting colour and becoming blush. As La Quintinie said three centuries ago, "Among all the fruits, Nature does not show anything so beautiful nor so noble as a pear." His compatriot the herbalist Mességué would have shared his enthusiasm.

Berrin Torolsan, bt@cornucopia.net.
For cookery articles from past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookery

DONDURMALI ARMUT
PEARS WITH ICE CREAM AND CHOCOLATE SAUCE

2 large pears of similar size
2 glasses water
1 glass sugar
1 tablespoon butter
About 75g dark chocolate
Vanilla ice cream
1 tablespoon pistachio nuts, ground or chopped

Jean Conil, chef to celebrities, culinary correspondent for the *Académie Culinaire de France*, and former *maître de cuisine* to Fortnum & Mason, lists this dish in his 1953 cookery book, *Haute Cuisine* – a creation with elaborate garnishes of spun sugar, cherries, etc, that he calls *Sultane*. He gives no recipe, but this humble version is still fit for a sultan.

1 Peel and halve the pears lengthways and neatly remove the core with a sharp knife, as well as the stalk and calyx.
2 Bring the water and sugar to a gentle boil, add the pears, lower the heat and poach until tender and slightly translucent. Leave to cool and put in the fridge to chill.
3 When serving, melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the chocolate with a tablespoon or so of water and stir over a low heat until melted. Keep warm.
4 Place each pear half, cut side up, on a plate, and drizzle the cooking syrup over.
5 Spoon ice cream generously over the pears, pour the chocolate sauce over without delay, and garnish with the pistachios.

ARMUT KOMPOSTOSU
POACHED PEARS

4 whole pears, similar in size and ideally elongated
4 whole cloves
1 glass sugar
4 glasses of water
Juice of half a lemon
Small slice of beetroot for colour (optional)

Eat this light and wholesome compote by holding the pear upright by the stalk while scooping off spoonfuls with the other hand. In the past it was on the menu of Ottoman households and particularly popular with Palace ladies, who, according to the late Neslişah Sultan, daughter of the last Caliph, would dip bread into the syrup. This dish is also a delightful way to use hard, unripe fruit. Any variety will do, so long as the pears have stalks and are of equal size. Some old recipes recommend adding cochineal for colour. Today a small slice of beetroot or purple carrot will give an appetising rosy tint.

1 Rinse and peel the pears whole, leaving the stalk and calyx intact, and pierce each one with a clove.
2 Bring the water and sugar to a gentle boil. When the sugar has dissolved, add the lemon juice, pears and beetroot. Poach over a gentle heat for 10–15 minutes, until the fruit is tender while retaining its shape.
3 Store, covered, in the fridge.
4 Serve chilled, standing each pear upright in an individual compote bowl. Ladle over the syrup. Delicious with clotted cream, *kaymak* (buffalo cream) or ice cream.

ARMUTLU KEK
PEAR CAKE

1 large or 2 medium pears
1 large egg
1/2 glass sugar
1 teaspoon lemon zest
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1/2 glass wheat flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
A pinch of salt
Half a lemon
2 teaspoons icing sugar

This cake (pictured on the previous page) is delicious with tea or coffee, but it also makes a good dessert, eaten hot, topped with cream. It is quick and simple to cook using any variety of pear. (It can also be prepared with apples, oranges, sour cherries or plums.) Multiply quantities as you please.

1 Rinse the pears and and drain in a colander.
2 Beat the egg with the sugar and lemon zest to a creamy consistency.
3 Fold in the butter and keep whisking.
4 Mix the flour with the baking powder and salt, and sift into the bowl. Blend briefly to form a soft dough and transfer to a buttered pie dish. Store in the fridge.
5 Halve the pears lengthways and core, without removing the stalks. Peel and rub with the lemon to stop the fruit from discolouring. Place each half on a board and slice finely lengthways, cutting almost but not quite through the stalk end, so that the slices can be fanned out.
6 Arrange the slices on the dough, fanned out round the centre of the dish with the stalk or stalks in the middle.
7 Bake in a moderate oven for about 30 minutes, until the cake has risen and the pears are embedded within it and deliciously caramelised. Serve with a light dusting of icing sugar.

ARMUT TURŞUSU
SPICED PICKLED PEARS

1kg small, whole, unripe pears
5 or 6 whole cloves
1 small cinnamon stick (optional)
3 or 4 bay leaves
4 cloves garlic, peeled
2 tablespoons salt
2 tablespoons sugar
1 glass red wine vinegar

This pickle goes particularly well with cold meats and roasts. It can be made from windfall fruit – in Turkey the wild pears known as *ahlat* are often used. In his 1898 cookery book *Aşçıbaşı* (*The Chef*), Mahmut Nedim bin Tosun recommends making this "delightful" pickle with a mixture of pears and small pink-cheeked apples, all whole, unpeeled and still with their stalks on.

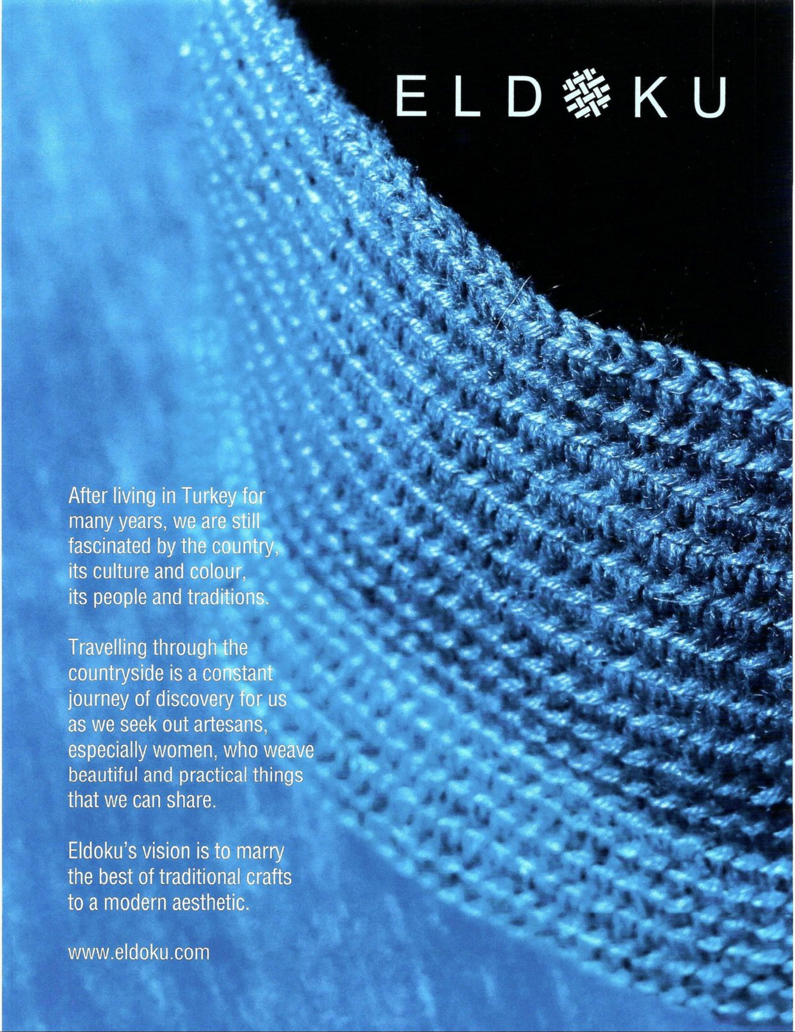
1 Rinse the pears throughly under running water and prick with a fork.
2 Place in a deep pan and cover with water. Add the spices, bay leaves, garlic, salt, sugar and vinegar, and bring to a gentle simmer. When the pears are tender enough to be pierced with the tip of a knife, transfer to a sterilised jar with a draining spoon, placing the cloves, bay leaves and garlic between layers of fruit. Cover with hot cooking liquid.
3 Seal and store in a dark, cool place. In a week or so the pickle will be ready to enjoy.

ARMUT SİRKESİ
PEAR VINEGAR

Pear peel
Water

Use any unwanted pear peel to make this fragrant vinegar at home with no expense and minimal effort. Make sure the fruit has been well washed first. The end result is less acidic than commercial vinegars, but, since it is free of preservatives and chemicals, it won't keep for ever.

Simply place the peel in a glass or porcelain bowl and add just enough water to cover. Stand the bowl on a sunny windowsill, placing a lid on top. Stir from time to time and allow the mixture to ferment. When it is pleasantly acidic to taste, sieve, pour into bottles and store in a dark place for use in salads. ◆



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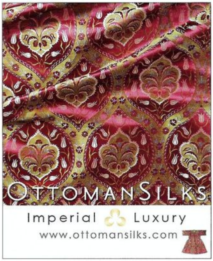

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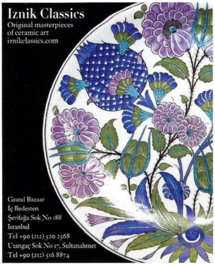

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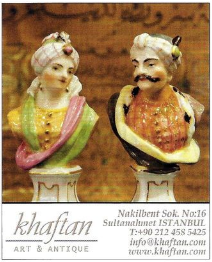

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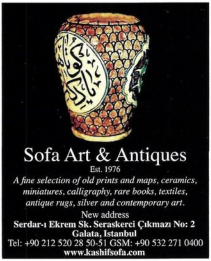

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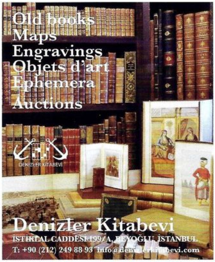

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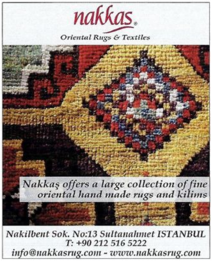

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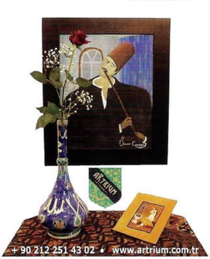

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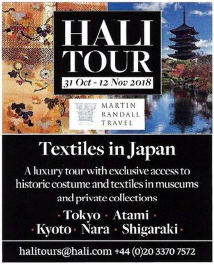

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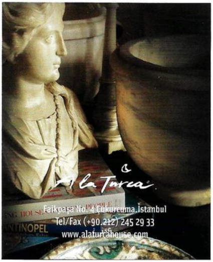
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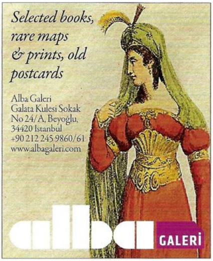

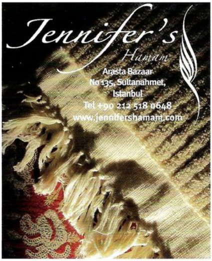

Meze mania

As meze grow ever more popular, Andrew Finkel samples some favourites, from stylishly modern to cheerfully traditional

As trends go, this one has been no more difficult to spot than standing in the middle of a runway watching a 747 come in to land. Still, I give myself a modest pat on the back for having detected in this column some time ago that Istanbul's nocturnal habits were changing gear. I was reviewing a new meze restaurant – a barn of a place off Taksim Square. The food wasn't terrible or even overpriced but there was a corporate air about it that made me squirm. This was before the days when we knew how algorithms could anticipate wants we never knew existed, and this was a meyhane (what I liberally translate as "drinking den") designed by the silent whir of a machine. It was almost a meyhane-themed restaurant, a Las Vegas tribute to the genre. But the oddest thing about it was that the customers were having a really good time. The music got louder, the diners didn't bother to leave their tables to dance and we paid our bill before it turned into a club.

I should explain that when I think "meyhane", the ideal that pops into my mind is a place called **Despina**, tucked away in the old Armenian neighbourhood of Kurtuluş. It is famous less for the freshness of its pan-fried liver or the crispiness of its cheese börek than for the drunken dispute there one evening between three middle-aged businessmen in which the one whose manhood was impugned shot dead the other two. To be fair, this happened back in 1995 and I am all but certain there have been no fatalities since. However, it all goes to show that dining in a meyhane is a serious business, where the food is an encouragement to drink, the drink to whet the conversation – even if the words become more slurred as the ice in the rakı glass melts and the evening wears on – and the soul is stripped bare.

A night at a meyhane is therefore not exactly the same as "going out to eat", another sort of ritual where you peer at what everyone else has ordered, and where the quality of the dishes itself sparks off the conversation. At the height of the recent tourist boom, Istanbul, too, invested in "fine dining", and much of this column has been devoted to the way innovative Turkish chefs were recreating three- or four-course meals using tastes and techniques originally designed for a different style of eating. The new Turkish cuisine was spurred on not just by an influx of high-end Western visitors but by exponential improvements in the quality of Turkish wine. You don't "pair" rakı – but with wine, distinct courses begin to matter.

And now things have come full circle. The tourists are beginning to drift back after a few lean years, but in the interim Istanbul's dining classes have asserted their independence. They don't want a formal parade of courses – they want an array of meze. Quick to spot this has been **Leb-i Derya**, once a formal restaurant on top of the Richmond Hotel near Tünel which has moved to another lofty setting, albeit on top of a normal apartment building a little way down the hill. The food, with Aegean touches, is good; the atmosphere a comfortable degree of soigné (you can hear yourself think), and you have to reserve to stand a chance of getting a table.

Leb-i Derya had a sister restaurant, Ferahfeyza, on top of the tall Chamber of Architects building in the dockland district of Karaköy. That too has metamorphosed into a modern meze restaurant and will be run by the owners of the **Duble Meze Bar**, which occupies the top floor to the Palazzo Donizetti Hotel. The music at Duble Meze is loud – very loud – and yes, as the evening wears on the hen parties and the birthday revellers and the works outings start to gyrate at the tables. However, the food is far from perfunctory and the meze colourful and carefully thought out – artichokes stained with beetroot or aubergines roasted with different cheeses.

If Duble is the future, **Aret'in Yeri** ("Chez Aret") looks to the past. There are two branches – one in a side street near Taksim, the other in the street of bog-standard meyhanes behind Beyoğlu's Flower Arcade. While both appear unprepossessing, the meze are that little bit special (sole grilled on a wooden skewer and a variety of cured fish). It's inexpensive and justly popular.

And for those still trying to buck the trend, Despina is open until midnight. ◆

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Village Voices

What was Uncle Norman up to in Ankara, and who was Cicero? Azize Ethem puzzles over a hoard of family photographs, and is no less confused as the Ottomans return to an almost unrecognisable Istanbul

Sorting out an enormous box of family photographs turned out to be a tedious, never-ending chore. Some pictures hadn't seen the light of day for decades, and a large pile was accumulating of people or scenes I have no memory of.

Coming across a picture of my uncle, I was happy to remember the stories of Turkey he told me when I was a child. During the Second World War he was military attaché at the British Embassy in Ankara – just at the time the famous spy code-named Cicero was at work.

The Turkish capital was a hotbed of intrigue, with spies around just about every corner. İsmet İnönü, the President, was doing his very best to keep Turkey out of the war, so mingling with the foreigners crowding the coffee houses were a large number of Turkish secret-service operatives.

Deciding to learn all I could about the Cicero Affair, I embarked on what I thought would be an interesting hour on the internet. The hour turned into a couple of frustrating days as I accumulated a plethora of conflicting information. Several books have been written about Cicero, including an autobiography, and then there was the film *Five Fingers*, starring James Mason and premiered in 1952, on which my uncle acted as an adviser. But who knows whether the truth about this mysterious Albanian Turk will ever be known?

In 1943 the British ambassador, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, had hired Elyesa Bazna as his personal valet. The ambassador had assumed a background check had been carried out… It hadn't. Bazna had held various posts in other embassies and soon ingratiated himself into the ambassador's life. While stationed in Riga, Knatchbull-Hugessen had often taken secret papers home from the embassy, and he continued to do this in Ankara. The valet was soon so trusted that it became his job to guard the ambassador's study – very convenient for a man with lock-picking skills and no apparent loyalty to any nation. While Knatchbull-Hugessen was having his bath, Bazna, using keys made from impressions he had taken, was able to open the diplomat's box and photograph documents.

In late 1943 and the first three months of 1944 these photographs were sold to the German Embassy by Bazna, under the code name Cicero. The British historian Richard Wires writes that Elyesa Bazna was motivated purely by money, was not a very bright petty thief and was easily hoodwinked by the Germans. But, paid in sterling, he accumulated £300,000 over his short period as an active spy.

In October 1943 MI5 recorded a breach of security at the embassy, and the code-breaking centre at Bletchley Park knew there was an intelligence leak, though they were unsure where it originated.

By January 1944 it was suspected that Bazna was Cicero, and a security team arrived to set a trap. Late at night Uncle Norman and the team set up an alarm attached to the ambassador's safe. Unfortunately, Bazna had been warned by an ex-mistress named Mara, a nursemaid in the home of the British secretary, and was able to remove a fuse and deactivate the alarm attached to the safe. By this time it was becoming difficult for the spy to operate, and by the end of February he had left the embassy.

To complicate the Cicero story, some respected historians believe he was a double agent, passing misinformation to the Germans. After the war the American intelligence agency, the OSS, researching the consequences of Cicero's role, came to the conclusion that the most important documents he stole were related to Britain's diplomatic negotiations with the Turkish government. The Germans, meanwhile, considered much of the information supplied by Cicero to be outdated or of little value.

Although Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen was reprimanded for leaving his keys and documents unattended, later in 1944 he was appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Belgium, and envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Luxembourg.

After the war, when Elyesa Bazna tried to spend his ill-gotten gains, it turned out that his German masters had paid much of the money in counterfeit notes, resulting in his receiving a prison sentence for passing forged notes. Unfortunately for him, his numerous attempts to get the West German government to replace the counterfeit money with what he felt was his due amounted to nought. In the 1950s, Bazna lived in Istanbul, earning a living in less than glamorous jobs, until he moved to Germany in 1960, working as a nightwatchman until his death in 1970.

In 2001 the Turkish National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) published a book called *The History of MIT*. In this, MIT disclosed that Cicero was also employed by the Turkish government, which was then able to keep abreast of the machinations of both the British and the German powers. And in March this year, a Turkish film called *Çiçero* was premiered. Hopefully this will not add further bewilderment to the Cicero saga, which I still find inconclusive and confusing.

After years of spending no time in Istanbul, I headed to the bright lights for a week in January. In commemoration of the centenary of Sultan Abdülhamid II's death, his descendants were meeting in the city for a series of social events and lectures. Deluding myself into thinking I was internet-savvy and with the aid of a map, I found a hotel just around the corner from where I would be spending much of my stay. Unfortunately, the map didn't show the one million steps up the hill between the hotel and my daily destination. Heading out from base camp each morning, I would pause on one of the park benches strategically placed along the route before continuing my climb.

Two of the descendants, brothers, were the image of Sultan Abdülaziz, and one man only needed a fez to look like a reincarnation of Abdülhamid. The most interesting evening was spent in what we were told was the Whispering Room in the Yıldız Palace. Restored to a state that takes bling to a new level, there was gold and mirrors and twiddly bits galore. In the middle of the floor was an impressive fountain, and a dozen wall sconces trickled water into shell-shaped basins. We were told that the Sultan used this room for private conversations, for the sound of splashing water would make eavesdropping impossible. Perhaps all the lectures had jaded my reactions, but all I could think of was that the Sultan obviously didn't suffer from a weak bladder.

I found the city bewildering, with all the changes of the past few years. Streets that once had interesting little shops now have fashionable emporiums with names found in big cities around the world. The view across the Bosphorus has changed, and although I guess it is all down to progress, I prefer what was the distinct Istanbul skyline, devoid of the new characterless skyscrapers.

After a week of socialising and climbing the never-ending stairs, it was time to return to the comfort of my woodstove, my view of the lake and my orderly life. ◆

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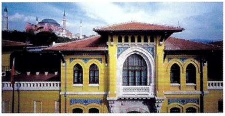

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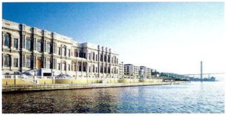

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THE HEALING TEST OF TIME

Lying motionless, crystals balanced on his eyelids, pebbles positioned over vital organs, soothed by tinkling music and murmured Sanskrit mantras, Roger Norman ponders the shamanistic origins and undeniable healing powers of traditional Eastern therapies

What an unexpected pleasure to find in central Anatolia an excellent Mongolian doctor with a thriving practice. His therapies are essentially Chinese (acupuncture, acupressure, herbs) with a dose of the shamanistic (rituals, prayers, stones). It's not everyone's cup of tea to lie motionless for an hour with rocks placed on their body. The liver stone sits on the liver, the spleen stone on the spleen and so on, with two small crystals for the eyes, and others balanced on the feet. According to a simple correspondence, the liver stone is a dull red veined with white, the stomach stone has the ribbed, pitted appearance of a human gut, and so on. Clearly they are considered to have innate virtues – or influences, perhaps – but they also serve to enforce a period of complete stillness and, thus, contemplation. If you move, the rocks and pebbles clatter to the floor.

Acupuncture remains the core of the therapy, to repair the chakras, the unseen channels of vitality and balance. "Stuff and nonsense!" shouts today's medical orthodoxy. It can be an aggressive shout among doctors and officials trained to the notion that there is only one correct methodology, as I remember from my time on UN poverty projects. In Vietnam, the Ministry of Health got very huffy when it came across traditional medical practices ("superstitions"), and even in India, where Ayurveda is as old as the hills, government doctors quarrelled with a sympathetic mention in one of our reports. (Recent *Guardian* headline: "Indian Medical Association says bridging courses for traditional healers will lead to army of half-baked doctors".) One might hesitate to take a broken leg to an acupuncturist or an ear infection to a herbalist, but it's a different matter for migraine or eczema, a chronically bad back or tinnitus, or problems that persistently defy orthodox therapies.

The word "shaman" has a bad press in the West, closer to sorcerer than healer. Interested in the subject years ago, I read what was touted as the last word on the matter: Mircea Eliade's *Shamanism*, a learned tome concerned largely with definition, categorisation and academic blah. Halfway through I forgot why I was reading it. But my interest has been sharply reawakened. On the top shelf of a small library in the Mongolian doctor's clinic, the Koran rubs shoulders with the Bible, flanked by the Upanishads, the Tao Te Ching and a collection of Mahayana sutras. Music evocative of tinkling streams and sunlit glades, Chinese to my ear, mingles pleasantly with softly chanted Sanskrit mantras and the murmur of Mongolian and Russian speech among the doctors and nurses.

There's also tinkling music broadcast in the big private hospitals that have sprung up in big Turkish cities over the past ten years, but the resemblance ends there. The architecture of these massive buildings looks to be based on five-star hotels, with a dash of the VIP areas of an international airport: smart, impersonal, expensive, perfectly kempt and well behaved. The therapy is dominated by machines of ever-increasing sophistication. There's no condition, it seems, that does not require a blood test, X-rays and a spooky spell in the MRI-scan tunnel. When the tests are done, the laboratories spit out the results and someone who might be doctor or technician examines them, consults reference books and signs the prescription. A common cold may require four medicines to be taken three times a day for a week. Our school matron always prescribed (in a strong Scottish accent) "fresh air and plenty of water" and, in the case of a bad headache, might reluctantly hand over a tab of aspirin.

Any foreigner who has spent some time in Turkey will surely have come across friendly references to shamanism among their Turkish acquaintances. Only the other day I was told by a university colleague: "Most of our rooted customs derive not from the Islamic but from the shamanic." A fellow journalist said to me years ago: "The Turks became Muslim by mistake. The natural and historical belief of our people is centred on the shaman." Do such comments raise the spectre of a lunatic fringe? Not to me. I lie there obediently on the doctor's couch with the liver stone in danger of sliding off the right of my ribcage and the pancreas stone precarious on the left, unable to open my eyes when someone enters the room because of the crystals weighing down on my eyelids. As evidence of the acupuncture treatment, I have a narrow line of tiny plasters on the inside of both ears – I tell my students I'm undergoing plastic surgery to reduce the size of my flappers. Morning and evening I ingest a mouthful of powder so fine that a whole glass of water is needed to chase it down. I have no idea what the powder contains, but it's certain that everything in it once belonged to a seed or a plant or the bark of a tree, and every item and combination of items has been tried and tested for a thousand years. Nor have I any idea of what's in the stuff prescribed by the

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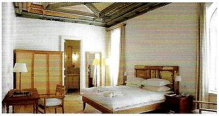

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Here's a passage from a 1950s book called *The Destiny of the Mind*: "The most conspicuous general characteristic of the magic universe was its state of equipoise… This was achieved by conferring reality upon all things in existence and by the dynamic correspondence operating between them. Indeed, these correspondences constituted the reality of the magic universe since all things were nothing but emitters and receivers of specific influences."

An academic work with the word "destiny" in the title is not widely read nowadays, one suspects, even though it sets out most interestingly the East–West intellectual and religious conflicts and conjunctions over millennia. The passage above – from an astonishing chapter, "The Magic World", on the precursor of thought systems East and West – seems perfectly to capture the idea behind the therapy of the stones, and perhaps to indicate the continuing attraction of the shamanic world for Turkish people who in some sense resist the arguments of scientific materialism. When I discovered the Mongolian doctor's clinic in mid-Anatolia, and especially when I learnt he had come to Turkey on a medical scholarship 25 years ago, I heard an echo of the old Silk Road traffic, which comprised ideas and people as much as merchandise. Here is an expression, beyond the iterative passage of armies and warriors, beyond the trade in silk, seeds and foodstuffs, of the famous bridge between East and West, oft mentioned and oft misunderstood, even by the Easternisers. Yes, there are plenty of Chinese acupuncturists in London and New York, but as a result of a different traffic with a younger history.

Orthodox medicine naturally allows for the psychological element in the process of healing. Canned music in five-star hospitals is an example, as are the well-turned-out young women behind the reception desks and the reassuring words of the doctors. I remember as a child that the mere arrival of Doctor Dockery at the front door made everyone feel better, while a tablet from one of the little jars inside his bag promised instant relief. Similarly, if more elaborately, the careful arrangement of the healing stones, the chanted mantras and the murmured prayers denote confidence, care and conviction. ◆

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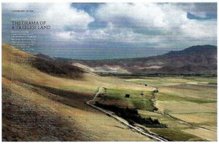
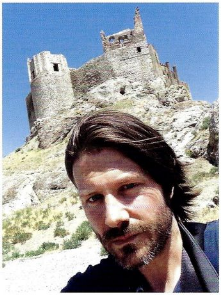
In memory of Brian McKee 1977–2018



THE DRAMA OF A TREELESS LAND



We are sad to report that Brian McKee, the fine art photographer, died suddenly, aged 40, on April 19 at his home in Üsküdar, where he lived with the artist Ai Kijima, his "angel" and inspiration. Well known for his images of Afghan and Indian architecture, McKee came to Turkey in 2014 to capture the spirit of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's book *Five Cities* for CORNUCOPIA. He stayed for four years, seeking out landscapes and architecture that spoke of spirit and humanity, resilience and transience. Here he is seen at Hoşaf with two of his photographs of eastern Anatolia, which inspired a four-part series for the magazine. "Even when a culture abandons a place," he reflected, "it leaves behind its remains, and through them we see a common thread, that there is always a decline and that socially and politically we create and we destroy, we rise and we fall. In the end nothing is permanent."

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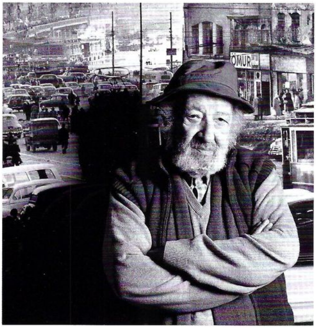
Just a bloke taking pictures

The grainy black and white images of Ara Güler evoke the vanished world of post-war Istanbul like no others, says Andrew Finkel, and the stories they tell never leave us.

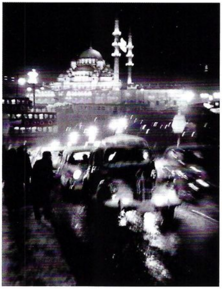
Portrait of Ara Güler by Ayça Oğuş



There can't be many who recall with fondness the whirs and clicks of those telephone-answering machines that worked with twin cassettes of magnetic tape. But decades later I cannot get out of my head the welcoming message of one number I used to call. "This is press photographer Ara Güler," it began, in an accent so gnarled even a Henry Higgins-trained linguist might have had been flummoxed trying to tease out its roots. The voice was as distinctive as his photographs.

Or at least I think that's what it said. Memory is an unreliable authority. I also recall Ara's name coming up in conversation with another news photographer. This was 1994 and I had been commissioned to do a piece with Ara about the Ottoman Archives for the US Library of Congress Magazine. I imagine I was trying to impress this other colleague with how I was working with Turkey's greatest talent, a man who rubbed shoulders with Henri Cartier-Bresson in the Magnum consortium. The very opposite proved true. "Ara Güler!" he nearly spat out the words, and with a sneer forged, I suspect, by envy, declared every picture the man ever took was "*flu*", ie out of focus.

Thinking back, it is not the photographs that are blurry – though some, of course, like the cars crossing the Galata Bridge on a snowy night in 1958 (right), are deliberately so – but the world of memory they invoke. If you close your eyes and try to recreate a post-war Istanbul (his first solo exhibition was in 1966), it is the photographs of Ara Güler that come to mind. His images occupy our imagination. A man walks down a cobbled street. In a minute he will disappear. But it is not just the man who will be gone but the cobbles themselves, along with the imposing if dilapidated façades of the street down which he walks. It is as if Ara already knew the reflections in his viewfinder would vanish – but of course he couldn't have.



'GALATA BRIDGE', 1958 © ARA GÜLER / DOĞUŞ SANAT VE MÜZECILIK AŞ

He took portraits of Maria Callas and Winston Churchill, Pablo Picasso and the young Dustin Hoffman. And here, too, he takes one step back to point his Leica not so much at facial contours, the cheekbones or furrowed brows, as at the person within. His real celebrities, however, are the working men and women of Istanbul, their grainy features melding seamlessly into a grainy cityscape that no longer exists. These photos are operatic, in the sense that we are looking down from the gods, and though we see the people who are performing, what holds our attention is a greater spectacle.

Yet, by the authority of the message on his answering machine, Ara Güler thinks of himself not as an artist, the keeper of memory, but as a working hack, trying to tell a story. Fictive or not, my own memory of the first time we met was in 1989 at a refugee camp by the Bulgarian border. Tens of thousands of ethnic Turks were being forced from their homes by a Bulgarian regime destined to collapse a few months later. He approached with the bow-legged gait of a cowboy just descended from a horse, the Leica hanging awkwardly from a strap on his neck like a bit of extraneous matter of whose purpose he wasn't sure. He was just a bloke taking pictures. As he stabbed away at the shutter, there was no sign of that inner demon telling him exactly which ones to take.

Later, I visited him at his studio. I was then working for a Turkish newspaper and we were doing a spread of his work for the Sunday supplement. The rooms were at the top of a building above what I learnt was the family pharmacy – years later converted into the affable Ara Café. The rooms were chaotic, even by the lax standards of someone whose own study is perpetually in need of a serious spring clean. Yet he knew exactly where to find the prints of the photos he was proudest of.

Some of those images have resurfaced in John Freely's posthumous memoir, *Stamboul Ghosts*. This is no coincidence. Ara goes by the sobriquet "the Eye of Istanbul". John became known as "Istanbul's Memory" and knowingly writes about a city that is no longer there. And it is fitting too that the Güler collection will emerge from boxes and in-trays full of negatives into a museum in the Bomonti part of town.

It might be fanciful, but I wonder if growing up surrounded by chemicals and apothecary solutions hadn't forced Ara Güler's choice of profession; if it wasn't so much the act of taking the photo that first attracted him but the magic of the darkroom as the black-and-white images emerged. If so, it should come as no surprise that what attracts us is how those same images threaten at any moment to disappear back into the darkness. ◆

The Ara Güler Museum opens at Bomontiada, Istanbul, on the photographer's 90th birthday, August 16, 2018. His photographs also appear in 'Stamboul Ghosts', by John Freely, to be published by Cornucopia *in September*

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